Discrimination suit vs CUC, officials dismissed. » PAGE 6

Saipan sales volume up 9.30 percent in Q3. » PAGE 9

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXIV, Issue No. 244 | TUESDAY DECEMBER 9, 2014 | www.saipantribune.com | 75¢

GOT A NEWS TIP?

TEL: 235-6397
235-2440

FAX: 235-3740

EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

INSIDE

BUSINESS

The contraction in Japan's economy last quarter was larger than initially estimated.

» PAGE 13

ASIA

Typhoon Hagupit weakens a day after it left at least three people dead.

» PAGE 15

LIFE & STYLE

Tom Hanks and Sting are among five Kennedy Center honorees

» PAGE 19

Hospital gets April ultimatum

» Two out of nine deficiencies addressed

By JAYSON CAMACHO
jayson_camacho@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has given the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. up to April next year to resolve nine remaining deficiencies or its condition of participation in Medicare will be terminated.

See HOSPITAL on Page 4

San Nicolas twits Dela Cruz's interpretation of voting law

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Tinian mayor-elect Joey Patrick San Nicolas has expressed dismay over incumbent Tinian Mayor Ramon Dela Cruz's allegations of fraud and claim that he won by 53.5 percent of the vote from people residing on Tinian.

This developed as Superior Court Presiding Judge Robert C. Naraja heard on Friday San Nicolas' and Commonwealth Election Commission's separate mo-

See SAN NICOLAS on Page 4

PSS needs to make up its mind on Koblerville gym

By DENNIS B. CHAN
dennis_chan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The clock is ticking for the Public School System to decide whether it wants responsibility for its Koblerville gymnasium, currently under construction.

A letter last month from the Northern Marianas Housing Corp. set a Nov. 26 deadline for PSS to decide to accept responsibility as sole sub-recipient of the gym but a request for a 30-day extension has been

See PSS on Page 4

HOLIDAY SIGHTS JAYSON CAMACHO

Tourists and residents stroll down the Paseo de Marianas to take in the sights and marvel at the number of Christmas trees on display. The giant Christmas tree is a favorite background for many who have their pictures taken at the site.

Local

Inos asks Christie's help in passage of HR 83

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Gov. Eloy S. Inos has written to New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie to ask for the Republican Governors Association chairman's help in urging House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) to put H.R. 83 on calendar before the end of the year.

"I write to request your assistance in having H.R. 83, legislation of critical importance to the economy of the Northern Mariana Islands, considered on the floor of the United States House of Representatives before the conclusion of the current Congress. Specifically, I would like to ask that you contact Speaker John Boehner on my behalf to inform him of my strong support for this bill and of the need for it to be acted upon immediately by the House," Inos wrote in his letter to Christie dated Dec. 2, 2014.

The governor told Christie that H.R. 83 is time-critical because it would extend three policies that would otherwise expire on Dec. 31, 2014: the bar on applications for asylum in the Northern Mariana Islands, the exemption for Guam and the Northern Marianas from the national numerical cap on H visas, and the E-2C visa for investors grandfathered in from the Commonwealth's immigration laws.

"Although the three policies deal with the sensitive area of immigration, they have been in place already for five years, so there would be no change in existing policy," wrote Inos, adding that one of the policies applies to both Guam and the CNMI, while two apply solely to the Commonwealth.

» Bill includes extension of asylum ban, E2C, and exemptions H visa caps

"So this action would have no impact on the nation as a whole," added the governor.

Inos said H.R. 83 originally passed the House in September and it required the Secretary of the Interior to assemble a team of technical, policy, and financial experts to address the energy needs of the insular areas of the United States.

During consideration in the Senate, however, Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) offered an amendment extending for five years the three policies specific for Guam and CNMI immigration concerns. The Senate went on to pass H.R. 83 and it returned to the House, waiting to be placed in the calendar.

Inos justified the importance of the passage of the bill, especially provisions on CNMI immigration.

"The first policy benefits the U.S. military, enabling the hiring of foreign workers needed for the buildup of forces on Guam and in the Northern Marianas by exempting our two areas from the numerical cap of H visas. The second policy underpins our tourism economy with China by prohibiting applications for political asylum from being filed in the Northern Mariana Islands. The third policy continues a U.S. visa available only in the Northern Marianas, grandfathering 261 foreign investors who have been in business in the Marianas since before the introduction of federal immigration law in 2009."

Inos said he previously wrote Boehner and House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) to voice his support for legislation similar in purpose to Sen. Murkowski's amendments of H.R. 83.

"Now as the final days of the 113th Congress approach, I am reaching out to you to ask that you also weigh in on my behalf with the Speaker," Inos asked Christie.

Inos alluded to his letter to Christie during Friday's Christmas tree lighting ceremony at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center parking lot.

"As a fellow Republican governor I want to ask his support and tell our colleagues in the U.S. House that HR-83 really has no controversy. Some folks who had an issue with that bill already lifted their concerns," he said.

Inos also echoed Saipan Chamber of Commerce president Alex Sablan's concerns on the extension of the asylum bar for the Commonwealth.

"That asylum bill before the House is important. Why? Because what it does, it opens the door for Chinese tourists to be able to apply for asylum. At the moment and prior to Dec. 31, 2014, they cannot. We're concerned that the Chinese government might take a very unfavorable deal. You know, the Chinese government doesn't want to see their residents go and apply for asylum in another country."

Like Inos, the CNMI's delegate to the House, Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP), has been requesting an extension beyond 2014 of the CNMI's exemption from accepting asylum applications.

Sablan and Inos are particularly concerned that tourists from China that come here without U.S. visas could later apply for asylum, drawing concerns not only from the U.S. government but also the Chinese government.

Currently, China is a lucrative tourism market for the CNMI under the visa-waiver program since 2009.

Carter allows US to file identities of EEMC candidates under seal

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The federal court has authorized the U.S. government to file under seal the identities of those who have expressed interest in the position of the Engineering and Environmental Management Company, which will have the power to expeditiously complete some CUC projects.

In an order last week, U. S. District Court for the NMI designated judge David O. Carter allowed the U.S. government to file under seal the identities of the EEMCs that are up for the court's consideration.

Carter also allowed the U.S. government to file under seal the information provided by the EEMCs and other information the U.S. deems confidential.

The U.S. government earlier notified the court that due to sensitive contracting and other information provided to the U.S. by the potential EEMCs, the U.S. seeks to file the identities of the proposed EEMC's and the supporting information under seal.

In the U.S. government's submission about EEMC candidates, U.S. Department of Justice senior attorney Bradley R. O'Brien said in order to focus on the best qualified EEMC candidates and to narrow the number of potential firms provided to the court, EPA independently reviewed the expressions of interest, which included the EEMC candidates' qualifications, experience, and other relevant information.

» Candidates narrowed down to 3 from 15

O'Brien said EPA consulted with CUC to narrow the initial 15 expressions of interest to five EEMC candidates.

He said the EEMC candidates' responses to additional information request were due Nov. 28, 2014, and EPA received four proposals after one firm withdrew.

He said EPA independently evaluated the remaining four candidates' proposals and narrowed the EEMC candidates to three firms that are being provided for the court's consideration.

O'Brien said CUC and the CNMI government have confirmed on Dec. 2, 2014, that CUC and the CNMI agree with the U.S.' proposed EEMC candidates and that CUC and the CNMI will not propose additional EEMC candidates.

O'Brien said due to sensitive contracting information (e.g. billing rates) contained in the EEMC candidates' responses to additional information request and the potential applicability of the confidential business information requirements, the U.S. is separately requesting the court for permission to identify the proposed EEMC candidates in a filing made under seal.

The U.S. is also asking the court for permission to submit, under seal, the additional information request and the applicable EEMC candidates' responses to additional information request.

See CARTER on Page 4

PSS expects 2 new school buses next year

By DENNIS B. CHAN
dennis_chan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Public School System can expect two new buses next year, according to PSS federal program officer Tim Thornburg, helping fill the need for transportation created by the transformation of elementary schools into middle schools earlier this year.

Money for the new buses will come from newly appropriated money from the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation.

"With the transformation of three of our middle schools and elementary schools, we've been busing more students now. For example, Tanapag [Elementary] is a middle school now and that means all the K-through-fifth grade needs to be bused to GTC [Gregorio T. Camacho]," he said in an interview.

This is the same for Dandan Middle School and San Antonio Middle School, which were previously elementary schools, he said.

According to Thornburg, the delegation appropriated $250,000 last year for the purchase of two buses but when bids came back in, costs came out to $279,000.

Education Commissioner Dr. Rita Sablan wrote to the governor asking to reprogram money for buses but never got an answer, according to Thornburg. But last week, their legislative consultant, Diego Benavente, informed PSS that the delegation "graciously granted" $30,000 for the purchase, he said.

The new money will be enough to purchase the buses and ship them to the island.

"We are hopeful we'll have those two buses probably in June or July, because when you purchase a bus…that's when they start making the bus. Once we can sign the contract with Triple J, who is the winning bidder, they will order the bus and in six months it will get here," Thornburg said.

The two new buses will be 42-foot Bluebird buses that can accommodate up to 62 passengers, according to Thornburg. It will bring PSS bus fleet up to 18 buses, he said.

"We are very grateful for all the members of the legislative delegation for this supplemental appropriation. It enables us now to purchase the buses. …It will help all our schools. Anytime you have a full fleet of buses, you will be able to get kids to school on time, which so important," he said.

According to Thornburg, about 2,400 students ride buses from home to school everyday, while 2,800 ride the buses from school to home after school.

CPA to update harbor master plans

By DENNIS B. CHAN
dennis_chan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Ports Authority will be gathering all its stakeholders early next year to update the master plans of the Rota, Tinian, and Saipan harbors, according to executive director Maryann Lizama.

An updated master plan could help the island of Rota in particular, where a dilapidated harbor leaves the safe arrival of goods up to the weather.

The Rota channel is narrow, with a threshold no greater than 200 feet long for vessels, according to Lizama.

Additionally, on the edge of the narrow channel is jagged rock, she said. It is the harbor pilot's call whether it is safe or not to bring a vessel in.

According to Lizama, CPA will meet stakeholders next year to asses "what facilities are already there" and "what facilities are planned to be there" and reflect that back to the CPA board for proposed changes and funding.

Rota's mayor-elect Efraim Atalig said in an interview yesterday that he looks forward to sitting down with stakeholders to discuss the issue next year. He believes a vessel's size poses a problem with the harbor's narrow channel.

Right now, a barge of goods are brought in with a tugboat, which he called "risky" in rough waters. But he pointed to the arrival of the MV *Luta*, a 150-foot boat, next year as a solution to this problem.

"We are hopeful that this will solve the immediate problem," he said.

In last month's board meeting, CPA board member Barrie Toves pushed for Rota's inclusion in updating the harbor master plans, following discussion on an update on Tinian's master plan.

"A lot of times the shipment of goods and commodities are not coming in. …We're anticipating we're not going to have good waters until the beginning of March up 'til August, and between September up to February," he said.

"The monsoon season is hampering the livelihood of Rota. So we want Rota to be included in the review and updating," he added.

According to Lizama, if the Rota's channel is widened and its breakwater built, then "we'd have no problems." But everything is dependent on funding, she said.

Korean Association to host business forum Saturday

The Korean Association of Saipan will host a business forum this Saturday, Dec. 13, at the Saipan World Resort's Lilac Room starting at 3pm. According to the association, about 50 to 60 businessmen and women from the community are expected to join but other members of the Korean community are invited as well.

There will be lectures from several businessmen and guest economist and attorney Park Moon Seo on business and the economy. Association president Kim Hong Kyun will also speak.

The goal of the event, according to the association, is to share information and prepare businesses for the CNMI's economic development.

While the event is targeted to the Korean community, the association hopes it can provide a good example for other groups to host similar forums, as all of the island's communities are needed for the CNMI's economic development.

Also, about 90 members of the Korea Air Force will be arriving on Wednesday. Association officials and members plan to meet these service men with smiles, greetings, and signs at the Saipan International Airport at 4:30pm that day.

A welcome party is also planned at the Fiesta Resort and Spa later that evening at 6:30pm. ***(Dennis B. Chan)***

GOP appreciative of supporters, voters for runoff win

»Heinz camp congratulates Inos-Torres

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The NMI Republican Party yesterday praised the support of the CNMI community that propelled its standard bearer, Gov. Eloy S. Inos and Senate President Ralph DLG. Torres (R-Saipan), to victory in the Nov. 21 runoff election.

Inos and Torres were certified by the Commonwealth Election Commission last Friday evening, a few hours after the CEC completed the counting of absentee ballots. The final count saw the GOP team garnering 6,877 votes against the 5,133 received by the independent pair of former House speaker Heinz S. Hofschneider and former Senate floor leader Ray N. Yumul.

NMI GOP president James Ada was effusive in thanking CNMI voters for their vote of confidence in the party's gubernatorial ticket.

"I am both overwhelmed and humbled by the insurmountable level of support from the people. All I can say is *si yu'us ma'ase*, *ghilisou*, *maraming salamat po*, and thank you. Thank you for voting for your GOP team of mayors, senators, representatives and, most importantly, thank you for entrusting the CNMI leadership to Inos and Torres. We continue to pray for guidance and wisdom from our Lord as we serve you, the people of the CNMI."

Inos

Ada said Inos and Torres would now be setting their sights on how to best govern the islands in the next four years.

"We have immediately begun our public service to you in accordance with the GOP platform. We are not waiting, but are pleased to share that our sleeves are rolled up, and we have hit the ground to begin working," he said.

In a Friday interview during the Christmas tree lighting ceremony at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center, Inos said he would be issuing a directive creating a transition committee to handle his and Torres' inauguration on Jan. 12, 2015.

He also said he will follow through on his promise to ask Cabinet members to submit their courtesy resignations this week.

"I will be asking [my] Cabinet to submit their courtesy resignations soon after [the formation of the transition committee]," said Inos.

The governor also took time to thank CNMI voters for allowing him and Torres to head the Commonwealth government for the next four years.

"I want to thank the folks that voted after the general election for the wonderful result. I very much believe in them as they believe in my running mate and me. We're ready to roll our sleeves and get into the second phase of progress. We have lots to do for the people of the Commonwealth," he said.

Hofschneider-Yumul Committee-to-elect chair David Attao, meanwhile, said although the independent pair fell short in the runoff election for governor, he is still proud of what they achieved in the past several months.

"We continue to extend our appreciation to our supporters and voters who helped us throughout the elections—both the general and the runoff. We worked hard and with a lot of passion and drive. Although we didn't have the numbers, we won a lot of hearts."

Attao also congratulated the Inos-Torres team for their victory in the runoff.

"We once again congratulate the winners and continue to hope they do the best the can for all of us in the CNMI."

Bring joy to the whole family this holiday season!
the dream big sales event
HYUNDAI
TUCSON
Fuel-Efficient 4-cyl. Engine • 17" Alloy Wheels
$21,995 OR ONLY $156 PER PAYCHECK
UP TO 29 MPG
HYUNDAI
ACCENT GLS
Fuel-efficient, 4-cyl. Engine • 16" Alloy Wheels
UP TO 37 MPG
$16,995 OR ONLY $120 PER PAYCHECK
HYUNDAI NEW THINKING. NEW POSSIBILITIES
Saipan's Best Warranty*
10-Year/100,000-Mile Limited Powertrain Warranty
HYUNDAI
ELANTRA
Fuel-efficient, 4-cyl. Engine • Back-up Camera & Monitor
UP TO 38 MPG
AS LOW AS $135 PER PAYCHECK
Customers First
$500 GIFT CERTIFICATE
TRIPLE J TRUCKLOAD SALE
$500 IN SHOPPING CERTIFICATES WITH THE PURCHASE OF ANY NEW CAR!
MAZDA3
Fuel-efficient, 4-cyl. SkyActiv Engine • 6-Speed Automatic Transmission
UP TO 40 MPG
$19,995 OR ONLY $142 PER PAYCHECK
CX-5
Fuel-efficient, 4-cyl. SkyActiv Engine • Push-button Start
UP TO 32 MPG
STARTING AT $23,995
30 THIRTY YEARS TRIPLE J Customers First
TRIPLE J MOTORS
Mon-Fri: 8am-6pm • Sat: 8am-5pm
Beach Road, Chalan LauLau
234-7133 / 234-3051
www.carssaipan.com
YOUR NADA CERTIFIED SALES TEAM, ASK FOR US BY NAME!
BEN MERCI FELIX
Like us on facebook
Triple J Motors, Saipan
*On approved credit (OAC). Some conditions apply. Doc fees and registration not included. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Vehicle may not be exactly as shown. See dealer for more details. Maximum credit card payment toward vehicle purchase is $2,500. While supplies last. MAZDA3 total price is $19,995 less 20% down payment. Financed at 5.75% APR for 60 monthly payments of $307.39 or $142 per paycheck based on 26 pay periods per year. Total deferred price is $18,443.40. Hyundai Tucson total price is $21,995 less 20% down payment. Financed at 5.75% APR for 60 monthly payments of $338.14 or $156 per paycheck based on 26 pay periods per year. Total deferred price is $20,288.400. Hyundai Accent total price is $16,995 less 20% down payment. Financed at 5.75% APR for 60 monthly payments of $261.27 or $120 per paycheck based on 26 pay periods per year. Total deferred price is $15,676.20. Hyundai Elantra total price is $18,995 less 20% down payment. Financed at 5.75% APR for 60 monthly payments of $292.02 or $135 per paycheck based on 26 pay periods per year. Total deferred price is $17,521.12

SAN NICOLAS

From Page 1

tions to dismiss Dela Cruz's election contest. Naraja placed the motions under advisement.

In an interview after the hearing, San Nicolas said that according to Dela Cruz, through his counsel Mark Hanson, the mayor was voted by 53.5 percent of people of Tinian or those residing on Tinian.

San Nicolas said that being on Tinian doesn't mean these voters are the only ones allowed to vote under the law.

"Under the law, if you as the parents decide to move to the States and have your child educated, say in Guam or Oregon, and you maintain your domiciliary, you maintain your residency," the former attorney general said.

San Nicolas said an 18-year-old from Tinian High School who joins the military and serves the country, whether in another country or within the United States, his vote is still equal to anyone who stays on Tinian.

"To say that only the people of Tinian, only the people who reside on Tinian, that their voice should only be the ones to be considered, I think that's wrong," he pointed out.

San Nicolas said if Dela Cruz or Hanson has a problem with the statute or status of certain people's residency, he can talk to the Legislature and the Commonwealth Election Commission.

"But for me to sit there and listen to Mr. Hanson say in open court that Mr. Dela Cruz won because 52 percent of people who reside on Tinian said he should win is false, is wrong," he said.

San Nicolas said many people leave Tinian for different reasons.

"Over my life I left Tinian at least three times. Two times to get an education, one time as member of the Attorney General's Office. I never left Tinian. My heart was always there," San Nicolas said.

Attorney Viola Alepuyo, Matthew Gregory's co-counsel for San Nicolas, said that Hanson bringing up the fraud allegations in court could be likened to just throwing candy around.

Alepuyo said Dela Cruz alleges that all these fraud should be cause enough to hold another election for Tinian mayor.

"The problem is because you are alleging this fraud, basically you're saying that the Department of Public Safety, the Office of the Public Auditor, the Election Commission, the Attorney General's Office and their investigation unit are all in cahoots, they're all conspiring…" Alepuyo said.

In a separate interview, Hanson said the point is that the election system on Tinian is broken.

"Many people were allowed to vote from off island that have no ties to the island. The system is allowing it. This is the evidence of that fraud," Hanson said.

If not for the complete recount of the ballots, the lawyer said, they would have not known the extent of the fraud.

"Bottom line, the problem is the people of Tinian don't believe it. They have no faith in the results and they want to redo it again and they deserve to do it again," Hanson said.

The lawyer said the people of Tinian would have to live with the results of the election for four years. "And they want to know that it's their choice. That they have not been scammed, that the election was not stolen," he said.

In his opposition to the motions to dismiss, Hanson said this election contest is still, at its core, a fight about fairness and integrity in the election process and the expectation of the people of Tinian that their votes count.

He said Dela Cruz won 53.5 percent of the vote on Tinian, a clear majority of the people of Tinian for which Tinian is actually their home.

Hanson said this Tinian election was undone by the 42 percent of those claimed "Tinian residents" that voted elsewhere by absentee and early voting on Saipan.

"This election was an example of how the absentee and early voting system has run amok," he said.

Hanson said voters from the mainland that haven't lived on Tinian for many, many years were allowed to vote. He said voters registered and voting in Guam were allowed to vote on Tinian too.

Hanson said many voters that have never had any legitimate ties to Tinian were allowed to vote.

He said the people of Tinian got an election marred by fraud and fatal mistakes by the CEC, which is the gatekeeper to the voting booth.

Hanson added that an evidentiary hearing must proceed to shed light on the improprieties in the Tinian election that "must surely lead to a new and fair election."

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

CARTER

From Page 2

Carter granted the U.S. government's requests.

Last September, Carter approved a settlement agreement entered by EPA, CUC, and the CNMI government that will require the CNMI government to, among other things, deposit over $22.8 million until 2018 to complete some stalled CUC projects.

In that September order, the parties were given 45 days to submit proposed potential EEMCs for court approval. Nov. 10, 2014, was the deadline for the 45-day requirement but the parties asked to extend the deadline by an additional 23 days. Carter approved the request.

The appointment of an EEMC shall be for five years, unless terminated earlier with the court's approval.

The $22.8 million that the CNMI government will deposit is intended to reimburse the EEMC's expenses and shall not be used for CUC's day-to-day expenses. The funds shall be used solely for approved EEMC's expenses for Stipulated Order 2 projects.

CUC currently has about $2.27 million in grant funding available for SO2 projects.

The SO2 projects approved for this funding include the CUC pipeline; tank erection cleanout and testing; secondary containment; and used oil disposal.

PSS

From Page 1

granted, according to Education Commissioner Dr. Rita Sablan.

The Board of Education and PSS are currently debating whether they still need the gym. Funding for the gym and prospects for a new junior high school in the area look slim, or may not be needed at all

The completion date for the gym is Dec. 15, but PSS does not know "if it's going to be finished because of the delays," according to Sablan. She said pouring of its cement foundation was twice delayed due to rain.

She added that the gym is still very "skeletal," based on what she has seen.

Sablan recently met with the principals of Saipan Southern High School, Koblerville Elementary School, San Antonio Middle School, Hopwood Junior High, and Dandan Middle School to review their use of the gym and the cost to operate it.

The annual budget to operate the gymnasium is $19, 540, according to Sablan, but this is only for maintaining the gym. Lawn care is estimated at $3,600 a year, with cleaning services and security services at $12,000 each per year. A CUC bill has not been estimated yet.

"This is already a rough estimate of $47,000," she said.

PSS expects to transport over 30 students each trip to the gym, Sablan said. Schools are not expected to use the gym regularly during the day, but more likely use them for ceremonies and interscholastic and afterschool activities.

"I asked the principals if they'd be willing to sacrifice already the funds they have" but "they are not willing to share the little funds they have," she told the board's committee on fiscal, administration and budget.

No commitment has been made by the Legislature or Inos administration on the future construction of a school in the area. As far as PSS numbers are concerned though, Sablan said, the need for a junior high or high school in the south is "probably not an immediate priority."

"We need to take a look at our central and northern side… rather than the southern side," she said.

It was reported earlier that Marianas High School, a "central" school, has over 1,500 students—an all-time high.

"There are so many costs that will be associated with it, and we need to able to be ready to assume those responsibilities that I know we are probably not capable of at this point and time," Sablan said.

Should we PSS be the sole sub-recipient of the gym? "Probably not," Sablan told the committee.

Marylou Ada, committee chair, pushed for partnering with Coral Ocean Point for maintenance of the gym. COP could write it off as a business expense, she said.

Ada cited Laulau Bay Golf Resort's maintenance of schools' baseball fields in their area.

"This is a skeleton. We don't even have lockers, flooring, or bleachers… We all need that in place before we have a fully functional gym," she said, adding that PSS needs to reach out to community for help because lack of funding.

The Koblerville gym is an open-air gym. The finished product would not have parking, or restroom or shower rooms, according to the Sablan. It would have very little amenities for students, Sablan said.

Board chair Herman Guerrero said they "need to seriously look at" the matter. He said another question is the property for the proposed new school, because even if they gained the lease-interest for the property, the question would remain of "what happens" at the end of the lease.

"Are we supposed to move the kids out at the end [of the lease] because the government refuses to do something about it? Those are factors that we need to seriously look at… whether to keep it or give to other government agencies that oversee sports activities," he said

The leasehold of the three adjacent lots for the proposed school was purchased by NMHC from TMP Inc. in July 2011. The approximately 60,000-square-meter properties cost $1.17 million, using funds from the Community Development Block Grant.

The remaining years on the leasehold are about 28 to 32 years, as reported earlier. Costs to build the school were estimated to be anywhere between $18 million to $20 million.

PSS would like to have fee simple ownership of the three proposed lots. But Guerrero earlier noted that PSS or the board "does not have the authority to negotiate" on the matter as it is up the to central government.

The current lots belong to three separate owners, according to Guerrero.

The gym is being constructed by Tropex Garden, with some funds redirected from a proposed but cancelled Saipan Southern High School swimming pool.

HOSPITAL

From Page 1

CHCC chief executive officer Esther Muna assured yesterday that the hospital is now working on its plan of correction to ensure that they meet the Dec. 22, 2014, submission deadline.

In a Dec. 4, 2014, letter from Rufus Arther, CMS Hospital and Community Care Operations for San Francisco Regional Office branch chief, he stated that based on a fourth Medicare follow-up survey of CHC, it has been determined that the hospital remains out of compliance with the requirements for participation as a provider of services in the Medicare program.

The hospital now has to come up with a plan of correction showing evidence that they will be addressing the deficiencies cited by CMS. The hospital is required to submit the plan by Dec. 22, 2014.

For now, the hospital's condition of participation in Medicare is being extended up to April 3, 2015, at exactly 12am, Arther said, after which the hospital's condition of participation will be terminated unless the hospital can submit by Dec. 22, 2014, its plan of correction.

"However…we are prepared, under certain conditions, to offer CHC an opportunity to retain Medicare certification for an additional time period, notwithstanding the September 2014 survey and the facility's previous record of noncompliance," Arther stated in his letter.

CHC's condition of participation got extended in recognition of six factors:

- The continued productive efforts by leadership of the hospital, including the CHCC CEO [Muna] and hospital administrator, in addressing areas of noncompliance.
- The noticeable improvements in a number of areas when compared to the 2013 survey findings, including the area of filling key essential positions.
- CHC's extraordinary financial, staffing, infrastructure and operational challenges.
- Your demonstrated commitment to continue to seek the necessary resources, and otherwise work diligently toward the goal of achieving and maintaining compliance with all applicable Medicare conditions of participation or CoPs.
- The expectation that CHC will draw upon an array of public and private resources to assist in identifying and resolving the root causes of non-compliance in a sustained manner; and
- The key role CHC plays in providing access to essential acute care services to the residents of the Commonwealth.

According to Muna, "we commend everyone's efforts in the improvements. Also notable is that CMS recognizes that improvements were made, despite our challenges."

Two out of nine deficiencies addressed

CMS noted that, of the nine deficiencies earlier found at the hospital, only two have been addressed while seven remain out of compliance.

Arther stated in his letter that these seven are the governing body, patient rights, medical staff, medical record services, physical environment, infection control, and discharge planning.

"It is notable that from the last survey when we had nine conditions with noncompliance, we are now at seven conditions. We are also very pleased that Quality Improvement & Performance Improvement (QAPI), a condition that had never been met before by CHC, is no longer a condition on the list. Nursing Services was also removed on this list at this survey," Muña said.

Arther stated that these deficiencies are what hamper the hospital's ability to provide adequate care.

What CHC has to do

In his letter to Muña, Arther said that CHC's Medicare provider agreement will be terminated at 12am on April 3, 2015.

"Importantly, effectuation of this termination action may be postponed if by Dec. 22, 2014 (10 days from the presumed date of receipt of this notice) CHC submits credible written evidence documenting and demonstrating correction of each deficiency," Arther stated.

"Upon receipt of such evidence, CMS will schedule a letter termination date to allow time to verify the corrections and further consult with CHC as necessary and appropriate. If we do not timely receive acceptable evidence of correction we will notify you that we will proceed with termination on April 3, 2015, and provide information about public notice, payment limitations, the readmission process and appeal rights," he added.

CHC's plans of correction must include: correcting each deficiency, improving processes that led to the deficiency cited, procedure for implementing the plan of correction, completion date of correction, tracking and monitoring on corrections, and title of staff responsible for implementing the plan for correction.

"As much as there are improvements, however, CMS follows a zero tolerance policy and only considers the action plan to be successful when the specified goals are achieved 100 percent of the time. Our team is already working on our plans of corrections to submit to CMS before Dec. 22," Muña said.

Yumul: $60K will be seed money for Garapan Public Market

Rep. Ralph N. Yumul (Ind-Saipan) said he is glad the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation approved $60,000 for the Garapan Public Market when it passed House Local Bill 18-64, D1 last Thursday.

"I'm actually happy it passed and we did address other issues. I know the [Garapan] Public Market needs funds in order to operate. When they were granted funds for the building, they weren't actually given assistance to run the program so this basically is seed money and hopefully make the place a lot better and help farmers bring produce into the market," he said.

Yumul said when he last had a conversation with CNMI Farmer's Cooperative Association president Maria Frica Pangelinan, he confirmed that the Garapan Public Market has been losing money. The CNMI Farmer's Cooperative Association runs the site.

"When I did the costing together with their president, Maria Frica Pangelinan, they were spending way above what they were selling. That was in the first couple of weeks of operations," he said.

Not surprisingly, the biggest expenditure by the market is utilities, said Yumul.

Last month, Marianas Meat Harvesting Co. started selling fresh meat at the Garapan Public Market from its slaughterhouse in Lower Base. The fresh meat complements the fresh fruits and vegetables already being sold at the site.

The Garapan Public Market was opened on Aug. 18. It was funded through a $200,000 grant from the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development as part of congressional appropriation that the CNMI Department of Land and Natural Resources was awarded for. ***(Mark Rabago)***

BW CAR RENTAL
NEW LOCATION
in GARAPAN, SUNLEADER BLDG.
Special Rate $100.00 for 3 days.
FREE Pick up and Drop off Service
287-2727
Mon. - Sun. • 9AM-9PM

Cop's traffic stop found unlawful; car swerved to avoid puddle, dog

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho has determined that a police officer failed to establish probable cause to stop a motorist who drove on a lane line for a few seconds after avoiding a dog drinking in a puddle.

In granting Hank Pua Arurang Jr.'s motion to suppress evidence last week, Camacho ruled that there was no probable cause for the traffic stop, since Arurang's car only momentarily touched the lane line, there was no oncoming traffic or other safety concern, and Arurang did so to avoid a puddle and a dog—in effect avoiding an accident and damage to the vehicle.

Camacho said the traffic stop in this case was unlawful under the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and Article I, Section 3 of the Commonwealth Constitution.

Arurang was represented by assistant public defenders Eden Schwartz and Michael Sato. Assistant attorneys general Clayton Graef and Emily Cohen represented the government.

Police officer Daniel Smith, Arurang, and John Leous Jr., a passenger in Arurang's truck, testified in court during an evidentiary hearing last Nov. 26.

Camacho found all three witnesses to be generally credible. He said there were some discrepancies in their recollection of road conditions that night but overall the witnesses all described the same events.

Concerning the condition of the road, Camacho found the accounts of Arurang and Leous to be more credible than Smith's account. Camacho noted that there had been rainy weather for several days leading up to the night of the traffic stop.

The judge also noted that Smith himself testified he did not do field sobriety tests because of the condition of the road, and a photograph of the scene of the incident shows a shoulder area where water could pool.

Camacho also noted that Smith's recollection of the night was not as clear as Arurang's in other ways, including the number of people in the car and a later conversation.

Smith said his focus was only on the vehicle and that he was not looking for and did not notice a dog or a puddle.

Thus, Camacho said, he finds the account of Arurang and Leous to be more credible concerning the wet road, the existence of a puddle, and the presence of a dog drinking from the puddle.

The case arose from an incident on June 28, 2014, at 4am, when both Arurang and Smith were driving north along Beach Road. Arurang and his two passengers were driving to their barracks near the Marianas Business Plaza.

Arurang was in the inner lane, and Smith was in the outer lane. Arurang passed Smith's vehicle, signaled and then changed lanes, into the outer lane. Shortly thereafter, Arurang signaled and made a right turn, heading onto the road that goes to the Marianas Business Plaza.

As Arurang made the right turn, he saw a puddle that extended a few feet into the right side of the road and a dog drinking from the puddle.

There was no oncoming traffic, so he moved left and his tires touched the lane line between the eastbound lane and the left turn lane. He heard the sound of the reflectors that designate the lane and moved back into the right lane after passing the puddle and dog.

Smith saw Arurang's truck driving on the lane line for a few seconds and decided to initiate a traffic stop.

Camacho said unreasonable searches and seizures by the government are prohibited under the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and Article 1, Section 3 of the CNMI Constitution.

In this case, Camacho said, the issue is whether driving on a lane line for a few seconds, to avoid a puddle and a dog, violates the Commonwealth Vehicle Code.

The Commonwealth urges the court to take the position that under the Vehicle Code, leaving the boundaries of the right-hand lane is a violation of the law regardless of whether staying in the right-hand lane is practical or safe.

Camacho finds that the evidence presented at the hearing did not establish probable cause that there was a violation of the Traffic Code.

The specific Traffic Code, Camacho said, places a condition on the mandate that a vehicle stay on the right side of the highway, and that a vehicle must stay on the right half so long as the highway is of "sufficient width."

Here, Camacho said, there was evidence presented that due to the puddle and dog in Arurang's lane, there was not sufficient space for him to stay in the marked lane.

Camacho said although Arurang did not stay in one lane, he did not violate the Traffic Code because he stayed in his lane "as nearly as practical" and did not move in an unsafe manner.

Camacho said the defendant moved across the lane line only after he had observed a safety concern—the dog drinking from a puddle.

Camacho cited that courts of many other jurisdictions have found that merely momentarily leaving the prescribed lane does not establish probable cause that a traffic violation occurred.

Camacho said considering the specific facts of this case—where in the absence of oncoming traffic, Arurang moved out of his lane to avoid hitting and driving through a puddle—there was no probable cause to initiate a traffic stop.

NMI history book to get updates

The second set of the *History of the Northern Marianas Islands* by Don Farrell is in the works and should be published around summer of next year, according to Education Commissioner Dr. Rita Sablan. Farrell's book has been widely used for years in the CNMI's public schools and this version will bring its history up to the present day.

All the editorial work has been done on all the book's different chapters up to the modern era, but Farrell would like to now include the 2015 election, she said.

"Everything is done except that [Farrel] would like to include the new government that is coming into office on Jan. 15," Sablan told CNMI Board of Education officials at a recent committee meeting.

These additions would include the new administrative, judicial, and legislative branches as well as the first elected attorney general, according to the commissioner.

The anticipated publication is in April 2015. The book should roll out before the summer or during summer, she said. ***(Dennis B. Chan)***

Stevens' discrimination suit vs CUC, officials dismissed

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The federal court has dismissed a discrimination lawsuit filed by a former employee of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. against CUC and four of its officials.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona dismissed Carlton Stevens' lawsuit against CUC, executive director Alan Fletcher, human resources director Frank Cepeda, wastewater manager Richard Wasser, and water and wastewater manager Paul Raczkowski, for lack of subject matter jurisdiction.

Manglona dismissed with prejudice all of Stevens' claims against Fletcher, Cepeda, Wasser, and Raczkowski, and dismissed without prejudice his complaint against CUC.

Dismissed with prejudice means Stevens can't re-open the claims anymore. Dismissed without prejudice means he can re-file the claims in the future.

Manglona granted Stevens 14 days from the date of the order in which to file an amended complaint.

Stevens, an African-American, is suing CUC and its four officials for allegedly not renewing his contract as direct responsible charge operator in CUC's wastewater division, providing him a used and inoperable computer, and not providing him an office space, among other complaints.

Fletcher, Cepeda, Wasser, and Raczkowski are being sued in their personal capacities.

Stevens, through counsel Pamela Brown Blackburn, asked the court to hold the defendants liable to pay him unspecified damages, courts costs, and attorney's fees.

In its motion to dismiss the case, CUC said that Stevens failed to exhaust all available administrative remedies, failed to state a claim of employment discrimination, and failed to state a claim of retaliation.

Fletcher, Cepeda, Wasser, and Raczkowski joined in CUC's motion and asserted that individuals cannot be held liable for damages under Title VII.

In her ruling last week, Manglona said for the district court to have subject matter jurisdiction over a Title VII of the Civil Rights Act claim, the plaintiff must have exhausted all administrative remedies.

Manglona said Stevens must plead that he filed a timely charge of employment discrimination with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or the appropriate state agency.

The judge said if the EEOC decides not to sue and the matter cannot be settled, the EEOC issues a right-to-sue letter and the complainant has 90 days to file a case in federal or state court or the action is barred.

Manglona said Stevens' first amended complaint pleads only that he filed a claim with the EEOC and does not state when or if he received a right-to-sue letter.

In his response to CUC's motion, Stevens conceded that he has not pleaded exhaustion.

Manglona agrees that exhaustion has not been sufficiently pleaded but said the court will allow Stevens to amend his lawsuit

With respect to the four CUC officials, Manglona said none of the individual defendants may be sued for damages under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act as "civil liability for employment discrimination does not extend to individual agents of the employer who committed the violations, even if that agent is a supervisory employee."

Because the complaint must be dismissed for lack of subject matter jurisdiction, Manglona said there is no need to address CUC's arguments on failure to state a claim.

The judge said CUC may renew the arguments if it so chooses, in response to an amended complaint.

Zoning pushes back crematory services for further review

By JAYSON CAMACHO
jayson_camacho@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A proposal by Borja Funeral Home to use its building in Chalan Kanoa for both a funeral home and crematory service has been put on hold by the Saipan Zoning board for further review of the project's overall impact and other concerns raised during the public hearing on Friday at the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

After nearly three hours of hearing the comments of business owners and local residents, Zoning Board chair Dave Blanco said they will push back the application for further review.

Another reason for putting off a decision on the application was due to the failure of the applicant to notify some residents and businesses within 300 feet of the site about the project.

"Because we have neighbors who have not received notification—14 days in advance—and who just submitted new information today, the Zoning board does not have all the information it would have otherwise had if actual notification had occurred and so the Zoning board needs to recess to digest these information and make sure there is a complete assessment of the project before a decision can be made," Zoning legal counsel Kate Fuller said.

At the hearing, Borja Funeral Home president Frances LG Borja said they were there to present their case to the public about wanting to relocate back to their original location in Chalan Kanoa.

Support

Borja noted that when their business was founded as Pacifica Funeral Service in Chalan Kanoa during the early 1980s, it was tied to the growing economic activity of the island, before CK became the center of commerce for a lot of businesses. During that time, a lot of businesses followed suit and started setting up in the area.

"All these developments came after Pacifica Funeral Service was established and, most importantly, these businesses continue to flourish right along the funeral services in the CK area," Borja said.

She said that having a crematory next to Mt. Carmel Cathedral and the CK cemetery will further strengthen their commitment to the village's residents and families.

"Our investment in a cremation facility is just an addition to our service that has been here for more than 30 years now. With today's economic difficulties, one can understand that having a less cumbersome and less costly access to services, such as the cremation services, are much needed," Borja said.

Borja noted that the CK cemetery has grown beyond capacity noting that records from Diocese of CK's Rectory Office show there are more or less about 7,000 burials that are entombed at the cemetery.

"This number is compounded by the fact that there are no more additional space or lots for new plots. Please note that there is a standard lot size of 8 feet long by 3 feet wide and 6 feet deep. Instead, by what has been practiced all plots are recycled over a 10-year period," she said.

Records from the diocese show that there are already over 150 burials so far from January to November this year alone. In the last two years, Borja Funeral Home sent 10 cases to Guam for cremation.

The proposed project site—in close proximity to both the church and cemetery—makes the area a suitable and ideal location for compatibility, Borja said.

Borja Funeral Home consultant Vicente R. Ada, who is the owner of Ada's Mortuary in Guam, stated that his business in Guam is one of four certified crematory operators.

Ada said that Ada's Mortuary explored many possibilities in expanding their facilities and decided to open up the crematorium in 1993—21 years ago.

"Ada's Mortuary is similarly situated as that of the proposed Borja Funeral Home facility. The front of our building is located along a major road and the back of the building faces a residential neighborhood, and because we have a duty of care to the community we serve, we also took into consideration our neighbors," Ada said.

Ada said they have taken extra steps to ensure that their crematory not only meets all environmental requirements and regulations but the need of wanting to be good neighbors to nearby residents.

"In the more than two decades of operating a crematory, not once have we received a complaint about any smell, smoke, or noise nor has the operation prevented our children from playing in the streets, families from having parties, people from mowing grass, washing their cars, walking their pets, or to go with their daily lives, or simply enjoying other family activities," he said.

He assured that a crematory in Chalan Kanoa is safe and will not endanger the community.

One resident, Rita Chong, said she supports the idea because the burial cost of more than $10,000 is too costly and that she too wants an option to get cremated.

Her opinion was echoed by Education Commissioner Dr. Rita Sablan, Joeten Kiyu Public Library executive director John Gonzales, former lawmaker Stanley Torres, architect Herman Cabrera and other residents in the area.

Opposition

Juan C. Benitez, president of Marianas EB-5 Regional Center, doesn't like the fact that there would be a crematorium in the area.

"It's not that we don't want the crematory services. I believe that everyone here present can all agree that a crematory service is needed, but the location itself, that is the problem," Benitez said.

He fears an accumulation of dangerous and harmful substances in the area that could endanger the environment in the future.

"Listen to the experts and get a federal entity such as the Environmental Protection Agency from the U.S. and have them do a full analysis on whether or not if it can impact [the surroundings]. I have collected data and have seen how bad a crematorium can be," he said.

Another resident, Ray Bermudes, also opposed putting the crematorium in the area, saying it could also impact them psychologically.

Sen. Sixto Igisomar (R-Saipan) said he doesn't oppose the area nor the business but Borja Funeral Home needs to regularly monitor for any emission of harmful materials that could come out of the crematorium.

"I don't oppose the crematorium, just really have it checked consistently because those little tiny substances that we cannot see can eventually enter your body and endanger the health of residents," Igisomar said.

Zoning's Blanco recommended that they should have a federal authority check out the environmental impact of crematoriums and also recommended that they should at least visit the Ada Mortuary area and see its impact on the neighborhood.

NMC students wait for their free snow cones last Thursday. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

ANMC promote holiday spirit with free snow cones

The Associated Students of the Northern Marianas College had a surprise treat for their peers last Thursday, with free snow cones given out to almost 200 students in a matter of two hours, according to ASNMC president Riya Nathrani.

By doing this event, Nathrani said, ASNMC really wanted students to get in the spirit of the holidays and "just feel appreciated" for participating in ASNMC events.

She said she genuinely appreciates the students' continuous support and hopes her peers will continue to be active in ASNMC activities. More student involvement in college activities were one of her goals as the new ASNMC president this year.

"It was really great to see their enthusiasm when we announced that the snow cones were indeed free. It encourages us as student leaders to continue to hold more events and strive to increase student participation at the college," she told *Saipan Tribune.*

Nathrani is this school year's ASNMC's president, along with newcomers Salvi Villanueva as vice president, Andrew Villanueva as secretary, and Roman Tudela as treasurer. Adrian Pangelinan, Keisuke Yoshida, and Guadalupe Camacho are its senators. ***(Dennis B. Chan)***

Ayuda Network appeals for corporate, business donations

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The Ayuda Network, an alliance of CNMI human and social service providers, is asking private businesses in the Commonwealth to keep them in mind this holiday season as it continues to request for donations to keep its yearlong services going.

Executive director Diane Camacho said even though they were successful in getting an additional $18,000 from the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation last week, the amount is still not enough to cover all its needs.

"We've really coming up to this House chamber for the SNILD to request additional funding because based on our funding for [fiscal year] 2015 we're only accorded $17,800 and that's strictly for operations. We can't operate our office without personnel staff so we're asking at least $18,000 to cover all our personnel."

Last Wednesday, the delegation appropriated the minimum $18,000 Ayuda Network requested under House Local Bill 18- 18-64, D1, which allocated $387,000 for various projects and activities on Saipan. The money came from poker licenses and fees.

Camacho said Ayuda Network actually submitted a budget request for $70,000 for fiscal year 2015. However, the government gave it only $17,800. The agency is an independent program under the Governor's Office.

"We're trying to get federal funding and corporate or business donations to help us out with our activities throughout the year. The only way we can move forward is through donations. We're asking for donations not necessarily to cover our personnel but to carry out the activities we're having throughout the year and this is month to month from January to November," added Camacho.

As if the limited budget wasn't enough, Camacho and her staff also has to deal with power problems at their office beside the Mount Carmel Cathedral in Chalan Kanoa.

"One day we called CUC [Commonwealth Utilities Corp.] because there were sparks outside and when CUC came and investigated…they had to shut the power down. It's been going on for at least a week and a half and we're still stationed in the conference room right next door to our office. There's power there and that's where we moved in and we just dragged our landlines, Internet connection, and fax machine so we can continue serving," she said.

Ayuda Network is the umbrella organization of all human and social service agencies in the CNMI. Some its members include the Commonwealth Cancer Association, Commonwealth Diabetes Coalition, Non-Communicable Disease Bureau Alliance, Let's Move Marianas, the Family Non-Violence Task Force, Northern Marianas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence, American Red Cross, Mount Carmel Archdiocese, Grace Christian Ministries, Division of Youth Services, and Division of Public Health, among others.

MARK RABAGO
Ayuda Network executive director Diane Camacho appeals to the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation for additional funding for fiscal year 2015 during a SNILD session last week on Capital Hill.

Farmers' Co-op gets $60K for operational needs

Saipan Farmers' Co-op president Frica Pangelinan received the good news from the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation Friday that the Co-op will be given $60,000 for its operational needs. This includes purchase of needed equipment and supplies such as chillers to preserve produce and value-added products. The Co-op has been operating on a shoestring budget since its opening but managed to sustain operations mainly through the commitment of two part-time employees and faithful volunteers.

With this new funding assistance from the delegation, the Co-op will be able to further organize its management infrastructure and promote the Co-op better. In the coming months, Pangelinan will try to encourage and work closely with the farmers and groups or individuals who are interested in producing value-added products from locally grown produce. The Co-op wants to play a part in the CNMI's effort toward food security, especially in relation to healthy nutrition from locally grown fruits and vegetables.

Pangelinan extends her appreciation, on behalf of the Co-op's board of directors and members, to the Saipan delegation and Gov. Eloy S. Inos for this much needed assistance.

In addition, she thanked government agencies such as the Department of Lands and Natural Resources, Northern Marianas College CREES, Division of Parks and Recreation, the Office of the Governor, Department of Public Works and many others, including private businesses, that have come forth with assistance, especially during the preparation for the grand opening on August 18, 2014.

Members of the Co-op Association include farmers from Rota as well as Saipan.

The store schedule for the Co-op at this time is posted daily outside the building.

For more information about the Co-op or how to sell your produce, contact this temporary number: 285-2713. ***(PR)***

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

Happiest of birthdays going out to Geri Willis who celebrates her (undisclosed age) birthday! Thank you for all that you do for our island community. Here's to wishing you many, many more birthdays to come, and regardless of how old you get, you still look fabulous as always! Have a wonderful day! Just know you are much loved and appreciated! God bless you always! Greetings come from all your friends and family and former students. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Remains of Alec Dye confirmed

ANDERSEN AIR FORCE BASE, Guam—Human remains recovered Dec 4. were confirmed to be Airman Alec Dye, deployed to Guam from Barksdale Air Force Base, La.

"We have lost a valuable member of our Air Force family," said Brig. Gen. Andrew Toth, 36th Wing commander. "Airman Dye will be missed by members of his unit and all who had the opportunity to serve with him. Our thoughts and prayers during this time of loss continue to be with his family, friends and co-workers."

Dye, deployed from the 2nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron at Barksdale Air Force Base, La., was last seen near Tarague Beach early morning Dec 1. ***(USAF)***

UFO's 'That's My Boy' set this Sunday

By JAYSON CAMACHO
jayson_camacho@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

After months of preparation and changing course midstream, the United Filipino Organizations' "That's My Boy" competition is finally set for this Sunday, Dec. 14, at the Saipan World Resort.

With 16 young boys vying for the title, UFO is inviting not just the Filipino community but the entire CNMI to join them and support the contest.

Doors will open be at 5pm and the show starts at 6pm. The entrance fee is $1 with a raffle ticket that will give people a chance to win great prizes.

Prizes include several dinner and lunch for two gift certificates from the islands' different hotels and the grand prizes will be overnight stays at the Hyatt Regency Saipan, Mango Resort, Fiesta Resort and Spa, and Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino.

There will also be guest performances by the Saipan Music and Dance Studio dance group, Keynotes School of Music, Uncle Ben's Studio, Erica Faye Tubera, Juliet Inocencio and Bernice Shane Sabino.

"This would be the last event after two years under my presidency and I am thankful and blessed for all the overwhelming support from all sponsors, donors, UFO members and volunteers," UFO president Annamae Adaza said.

For more details and sponsorship for the event, call Adaza at 483-5237, UFO secretary Mario Mayuga 285-1021, UFO event chair Nel Atalig at 233-3845, or UFO event director Ernie Molina at 789-8212.

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB15-COTA/FTA-024

SUBMISSION DATE: DECEMBER 29, 2014
TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"PURCHASE AND DELIVERY OF FOUR (4) 2013 OR NEWER MOBILITY EQUIPPED VANS FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OFFICE TRANSIT AUTHORITY"

THE SPECIFICATION FOR THIS PROJECT WIL BE AVAILABLE ON OR AFTER **DECEMBER 02, 2014** AT COTA, OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, 2ND FLOOR, NMI RETIREMENT FUND BUILDING, ISA DRIVE, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN

THIS IS A FEDERALLY FUNDED PROJECT, BIDDERS ARE REQUIRED TO COMPLY WITH FTA FEDERAL CONTRACT CLAUSES AS APPLICABLE..

THE GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL PROPOSALS AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTION IN ANY PROPOSAL IF IN ITS OPINION TO DO SO, WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE GOVERNMENT. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ THOMAS J. CAMACHO
SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

BEFORE THE COMMONWEALTH PUBLIC UTLITIES COMMISSION

NOTICE OF SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission will conduct a special business meeting at 10a.m. on December 11, 2014 at the CPUC Conference Room, Suite 103, CDA Building, Beach Road, Oleai, to consider the following agenda. Public attendance is welcome. Reports and other documents relevant to the agenda will be available at the meeting for public inspection. Questions regarding the agenda should be referred to Ms. Rose Ada-Hocog, who serves as the Commission's administrative assistant at 670-989-1974.

AGENDA

1. **Administrative matters:**
   a. Call to order; approval of agenda; & determination of quorum
2. **CPUC-RFP-14-001: CPUC Expert Consultant Services**
3. **Public comments**

JUDICIARY
Northern Mariana Islands

Request for Proposals
14-COURTS-02

Janitorial Services for the Guma Hustisia, Iimwal Aweewee, House of Justice

The Commonwealth Judicial Branch is soliciting sealed proposals for janitorial services for the Guma Hustisia/Iimwal Aweewee/House of Justice, Saipan, for a period of one (1) year.

Firms or individuals submitting proposals must have a valid CNMI business license and be in compliance with applicable local and federal laws and regulations, including minimum wage requirements.

Proposal procedures shall comply with CNMI Procurement Regulations (NMIAC Title 70, Subchapter 30.3).

The proposal package will be available on or after **November 24, 2014** at the office of the Budget and Finance Director, Guma Hustisia, Saipan, or by request faxed to (670) 236-9702 or emailed to juandiego.tenorio@justice.gov.mp.

A **mandatory** pre-proposal meeting and site visit will be held on **December 16, 2014 at 10:30 a.m.**, local time at the Guma Husistia Conference Room. Any questions or inquiries shall be discussed at the meeting.

Sealed proposals must be marked **RFP14-COURTS-02** and submitted in one (1) original and three (3) copies to the Budget and Finance Director, Guma Hustisia, Saipan no later than **December 19, 2014, local time, 10:00 a.m.** Proposals must expressly state that the price offered is good for a one (1) year period. Firms or individuals submitting proposals from outside the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their proposal by submitting a Notice of Intent to Propose to the Budget and Finance Director no later than **10:00 a.m., local time, December 19, 2014**. Notices of Intent may be faxed to (670) 236-9702 or emailed to juandiego.tenorio@justice.gov.mp. For proposers located outside the CNMI, one (1) original and three (3) copies of sealed proposals must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **December 19, 2014**, AND the proposal must be received at the Office of the Budget and Finance Director no later than **December 26, 2014, close of business**.

The CNMI Government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, or portions thereof, and waive immaterial defects if to do so would be in the best interest of the CNMI Government. All proposals received shall become the property of the CNMI Government and will not be returned to the proposer.

/s/Alexandro C. Castro
Chief Justice

/s/ Juan Diego V. Tenorio
Budget and Finance Director

US provides $13.8M Compact payments to FSM

In October and November, the FSM Department of Finance received Compact Grant Assistance payments from the United States government totaling over $13.8 million. These payments were for Compact Sector Grants and Supplementary Education Grants:

- Education, $4,056,600
- Health, $3,215,000
- Supplementary Education Grant, $3,085,950
- Infrastructure, $2,247,620
- Public Sector Capacity Building, $504,300
- Private Sector Development, $298,600
- Environment, $238,600
- Enhanced Reporting and Accountability, $190,700
- Total amount, $13,837,370

Compact funded project of the month is the furnishing of the Yap College of Micronesia Campus' Student Center and Computer Lab. Yap's COM campus has a new fully furnished building to house the Computer Lab, Student Center, and additional classrooms. The furnishings were the finishing touch to this project funded under the Compact Infrastructure Sector grant.

The project began in 2009 with the award of $2.1 million from the Infrastructure Sector Grant to construct the building. The furnishings were provided through an additional grant of $100,000 awarded in 2014. The FSM Project Management Unit reported that the project is essentially complete and provided photos of the furnished computer lab, classrooms, offices, and meeting rooms. ***(U.S. Embassy Kolonia)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Newly furnished classroom.

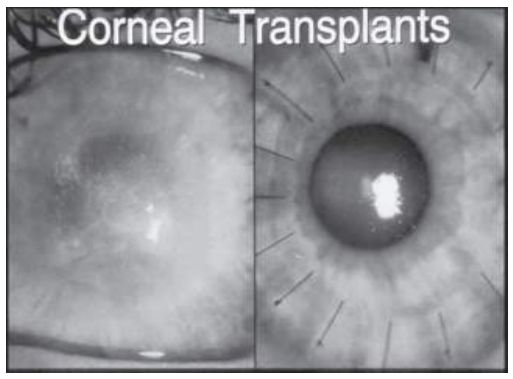
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Newly furnished computer lab.

Marianas Eye Institute makes history with first organ transplant in the NMI

The CNMI's first corneal transplant occurred this past week with a collaborative effort between Marianas Eye Institute, the Commonwealth Health Center, and Micronesian Air Cargo Services. Marianas Eye Institute's own ophthalmologist, Dr. Dennis Williams, performed the historic effort.

Williams, formerly a Clinical Associate Professor of Eye Surgery at the University of South Florida, moved to the CNMI in March of this year to join Marianas Eye Institute. Having a talented surgeon on island that was able to perform the delicate surgery saved the patient, their family and the CNMI significant time and money. Previously this type of procedure was referred off-island.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Photo of cornea before (left side) and after (right side).

Williams

In a corneal transplant, the patient's own damaged cornea is removed, and replaced with a donor cornea. The cornea is the clear transparent surface of the eye that covers the brown or blue iris. The cornea can become cloudy because of injury, infection, or changes from aging, and when it does, the patient is unable to see clearly.

Williams has vast experience in performing corneal transplants, and was excited to do the surgery here. "I felt confident that we would have a good outcome from this surgery. The team of medical staff at CHC were prepared and eager to assist in this historic procedure," he said.

The procedure, which takes about an hour to perform, involves the removal of the patient's damaged cornea, and the suturing of the new donor cornea in place with delicate sutures that are thinner than human hair. The surgery, like most eye surgery, is performed using an operating microscope.

"The procedure went very smoothly," said Williams. "But as with any organ transplant, we have to watch carefully for rejection of the donor tissue by the patient's immune system."

Williams explained that corneal transplants have a lower risk of rejection than other organ transplants such as heart transplants and kidney transplants, and the success rate with corneal transplants is very high. "The healing time is approximately 9-12 months, and of course, our ultimate goal is to improve the patient's vision," explained Williams.

Performing the transplant required a coordinated effort. "One of the challenges we faced was finding a donor and getting the tissue here," said Russ Quinn, CEO of Marianas Eye Institute. "The tissue bank in Florida was unfamiliar with the CNMI, so they would only fly the cornea tissue to Guam. With the assistance of Micronesian Air Cargo Services, we were able to get the tissue here the last mile."

"Despite those challenges, all in all, it is certainly more cost-efficient to fly a new cornea to the CNMI than to fly a patient across the world," said Quinn. "To perform the surgery in the CNMI was a great savings to the patient and to the Medical Referral system, and of course so much more convenient for the patient and family."

The operating room team at CHC was well-prepared for the historic surgery. "The CHC staff did beautifully in skillfully assisting throughout the procedure," said Williams. "I had full confidence in the entire team."

Asked if they anticipate more corneal transplants, Quinn replied: "Certainly, now that the first one has been performed, we have a system in place to make acquiring the donor tissue easier, and we expect to perform the surgery as often as the need arises. We have always been committed to bringing together the talent and the technology to provide leading care to the peoples of the CNMI." ***(PR)***

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

December 9, 2002

Lizama wins anew in mishap case

Associate Judge Juan T. Lizama scored another victory—albeit late—in the civil suit he has been pursuing since he figured in a car accident on Saipan 14 years ago. The Superior Court, with Guam magistrate Joaquin V.E. Manibusan sitting as pro-tempore judge, ruled that Lizama is entitled to relief under Rule 60(b), a development that his lawyers explained would reinstate former defendants Pacifica Insurance Underwriters Inc. and Tokyo Marine and Fire Insurance Company Ltd. to the case. Rule 60(b) essentially allows the overturning of a summary judgment, according to Lizama's lawyers, Vicente Salas and F. Matthew Smith. "The insurance companies should have been in the case since the very beginning," Smith said.

Deadline for Pathway sign up extended

The Marianas Visitors Authority and organizer, Friends of the Beach Pathway, has extended the signing up deadline for this coming Saturday's Saipan Beach Pathway Christmas in the Marinas to up to Thursday, December 12. Originally scheduled last December 7, MVA and the Friends of the Beach Pathway decided to postpone the event due to the expected bad weather coming through the weekend during a meeting last Thursday morning at MVA offices. The festivities set up to mark the pathway's completion as well as the start of the Yuletide season consists of a men's and women's outrigger race, a 5-kilometer and 10-kilometer walk, and a 10-kilometer competitive run.

December 9, 2007

Tinian casino project on hold because of Saipan gaming bill

A Tinian casino plan has been put on hold because of a legislative move to legalize gaming on Saipan. Bridge Investment Group had scheduled its groundbreaking ceremony for the casino project for Dec. 28, 2007. But the event was postponed after the House of Representatives passed House Bill 15-322 on Wednesday. "Our company was caught by surprise by this action, as I am sure the rest of the Saipan public was," said Phillip Mendiola-Long, executive vice president of Bridge Investment Group. "We are very disappointed as this action will negatively impact our project on Tinian. Therefore, our owners want to stop all movement on our project until the Legislature decides what it wants to do," he added.

Legislature OKs diabetes coverage bill

The Legislature has passed a bill requiring insurance firms to list diabetes under covered benefits. The House of Representatives voted 11-0 on Thursday in favor of Senate Bill 15-15. The bill will make a must for health insurance plans to provide coverage for diabetes supplies and self-management education as part of basic coverage. S.B. 15-15, sponsored by Rota Sen. Paul Manglona, will become law once approved by the governor. It will be known as the Diabetes Health Maintenance Act of 2006. The measure will benefit people with insulin-using diabetes and with elevated blood glucose levels induced by pregnancy.

December 9, 2008

Man throws rock at cops, resists arrest

A man who allegedly threatened to shoot another person with a spear gun threw rocks at responding police officers in Chalan Kanoa early Saturday morning, resulting in his arrest. Deigo Pangelinan Kaipat, 41, was taken to the Superior Court yesterday for a bail hearing. He was detained for assault and battery, obstruction of justice, and resisting arrest. Associate Judge David A. Wiseman imposed a $1,500 cash bail for Kaipat's temporary liberty. Preliminary hearing was set for Dec. 15, 2008 at 9am. Detective Katherine Manglona stated in her report that police officers responded to the beach area in Chalan Kanoa after receiving a call about a disturbance that possibly involved a gun.

Video shop employee in piracy case gets three-year probation

The federal court imposed yesterday a three-year probation sentence on an employee of a video shop where the Federal Bureau of Investigation seized thousands of pirated DVDs and VHS tapes. U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Alex R. Munson also ordered Min Jo to perform 100 hours of community service. Munson referred the 51-year-old Korean to the NMI Immigration to determine if he is a deportable alien. The judge also required the defendant to pay a $100 court assessment fee. Munson granted Assistant U.S. Attorney Kirk Schuler's motion that all property seized in the case shall be forfeited to the U.S. government.

United rounds out 2014 with more than two dozen awards

CHICAGO—United Airlines continued in 2014 to create a more flyer-friendly experience for its customers, and the company ends the year with more than two dozen awards for its investments in customer products and services, technology and corporate responsibility.

"United's focus in 2014 has been about giving our customers more—more information, more comfort, more control over their travel experience and more benefits for their loyalty," said Jeff Foland, executive vice president of marketing and strategy. "We're pleased with the progress we've made, but we're not finished. Next year, our employees, customers and communities we serve can look forward to continued improvements and investments that will make United an even more flyer-friendly airline."

Customer experience

This year, United invested in virtually every customer touch point, including Wi-Fi availability on more than 370 aircraft, with additional aircraft being outfitted at the rate of one per day; a multi-million-dollar investment in domestic premium-cabin food and beverage service; new economy-cabin meal and snack choices; and personal device entertainment on more than 180 airplanes.

The company is also creating more user-friendly airport experiences and last month began extensively remodeling its Newark hub terminal, complete with 24 new restaurants inspired by acclaimed chefs, and electronic payment technology with nearly 6,000 iPads with which customers can order food or check flight information. In May, United opened a new state-of-the-art concourse at Boston Logan International Airport and new LEED-certified terminals in Houston and San Francisco, added new Global Services reception lobbies in Newark and San Francisco and opened several new United Clubs. The airline also added more than 500 charging stations for customers to power up their electronics on the go.

■ **2014 Airline of the Year**—*Global Traveler*

■ **Best North American Airline for International Travel**—*Premier Traveler*

■ **Best Airline in North America**—Irish Travel Industry Awards

■ **Best North American Airline Serving the Middle East**—*Business Traveller* (Middle East)

■ **Best North American Airline**—*Business Traveller* (China)

■ **Best North American Airline**—*Business Traveller* (Asia-Pacific)

■ **Best Trans-Atlantic Airline**—Scottish Passenger Agents' Association Travel Awards

■ **Best Service Airline Award**—Incheon International Airport

MileagePlus

MileagePlus is United's industry-leading loyalty program. With a wide network of partners through which members may earn and redeem miles, MileagePlus offers the most "Saver" award-seat availability among the largest U.S. global airlines, according to the fifth annual Switchfly Reward Seat Availability Survey published by IdeaWorksCompany in May 2014. MileagePlus members earn award miles by flying United, United Express, Star Alliance airlines or other airline partners, and by purchasing products or services from partners around the globe. Members enjoy a host of options for using those award miles, including to pay for travel, hotel stays, car rentals and merchandise.

In November, United launched yet another way for MileagePlus members to earn miles with the new "MileagePlus X" smartphone app that members may use when shopping at retail locations. The airline also expanded partnerships with Hertz and Marriott.

■ **Best Frequent-Flyer Program** (11th straight year)—*Global Traveler* readers

■ **Best Frequent-Flyer Bonus Program**—*Global Traveler* readers

■ **Best Credit Card and Best Credit Card Rewards Program**, for the United MileagePlus Club Card—*Global Traveler* readers

■ **Best Frequent-Flyer Affinity Credit Card Redemptions**, for the United MileagePlus Explorer Card—*Global Traveler* readers

■ **Best Domestic Frequent-Flyer Program**—*Premier Traveler*

■ **Best Airline Credit Card Rewards Program in the World**—*Premier Traveler*

■ **Globerunner Best Airline in the Americas Award**—*Frequent Business Traveler*

■ **CIO 100** winner for mobile technology—*CIO Magazine*

■ **Most Innovative Award**—*Shanghai Daily*

Corporate social responsibility

United's global workforce of more than 85,000 employees offers its time, talents and energy to make an impact in their communities and volunteers thousands of hours annually. United proudly supports hundreds of organizations worldwide that work to improve lives through health and education, provide opportunities for youth, connect communities with arts and culture, and improve the environment.

■ **Honored Partner Award**—Happy Hearts Fund

■ **One of the Most Admired Corporations for Supplier Diversity**—*Minority Business News*

■ **North American Sustainability Outstanding Achievement Award**—Global Business Travel Association

■ **Spirit of Youth Award**—National Runaway Safeline

■ **Herbie Hancock Humanitarian Award**—Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz

■ **100 percent rating in the Corporate Equality Index and Best Place to Work Award**—Human Rights Campaign Foundation

■ **Human Rights Corporate Award**—National Immigrant Justice Center

■ **Top 100 Corporations of the Year**—*Women's Enterprise USA Magazine*

■ **Top 100 Companies Providing the Most Opportunities for Latinos**—*Latino Magazine* ***(United)***

FHB BUSINESS ACTIVITY REPORT FOR Q3

Saipan sales volume up 9.30 percent

First Hawaiian Bank's third quarter 2014 Business Activity Report for Saipan showed a 9.30 percent increase for "same store sales" over 2013, according to Laura Dacanay, First Hawaiian Bank senior vice president and CNMI Region Manager.

»9 out of 11 sectors show positive growth

"This third quarter increase of 9.30 percent marks the 12th consecutive quarter of positive growth for credit and debit card spending in the CNMI area," said Dacanay. "Eight of the 11 sectors posted double digit increases with Retail leading the way, up 29.19 percent, followed by Home Improvement up 25.57 percent, and Travel Activities up 17.92 percent. This positive growth is good indication that our economy continues to regain momentum."

The BAR tracks card sales activity in 11 different economic sectors including retail, hotels, home improvement, restaurants, shipping and travel activities, among other categories.

First Hawaiian's Saipan BAR provides a broad measure of economic activity.

First Hawaiian is a major card processor of debit and credit sales transactions. In 2013, the bank processed over $4.4 billion worth of credit and debit sales transactions. The bank provides merchant services to nearly 7,000 First Hawaiian Bank merchant locations throughout Hawaii, Guam, CNMI and the U.S. mainland.

First Hawaiian Bank with assets of $18.1 billion was founded in 1858 and has been serving the CNMI region for over 16 years. The bank processes all major U.S. credit cards as well as JCB, China Union Pay, and BC Global Card. ***(FHB)***

Bank of Hawaii awards $25K grants to Saipan recipients

Bank of Hawaii named Cha, Fruitful, Inc. dba Island Infusions, Keynotes School of Music, OceanSoul Unlimited and Pink Mango as recipients of the I Kinometi Para I Kumunidåt I Islå-ta Small Business Revitalization and Development Grants. Each awardee received $5,000.

This marks the third year that Bank of Hawaii has offered this program. The small businesses selected help in some way to foster economic growth by adding new product lines, creating new jobs or offering economic diversity.

■ **Cha**, a restaurant that offers pearl or snow drinks and tea, will purchase a point-of-sale cashier system and plans to add part-time jobs for students who seek on-the-job work experience.

■ **Fruitful, Inc. dba Island Infusions**, a manufacturer and retail establishment that specializes in tropically-infused liqueurs, will purchase a 30-gallon still to create new products that feature local tropical fruit.

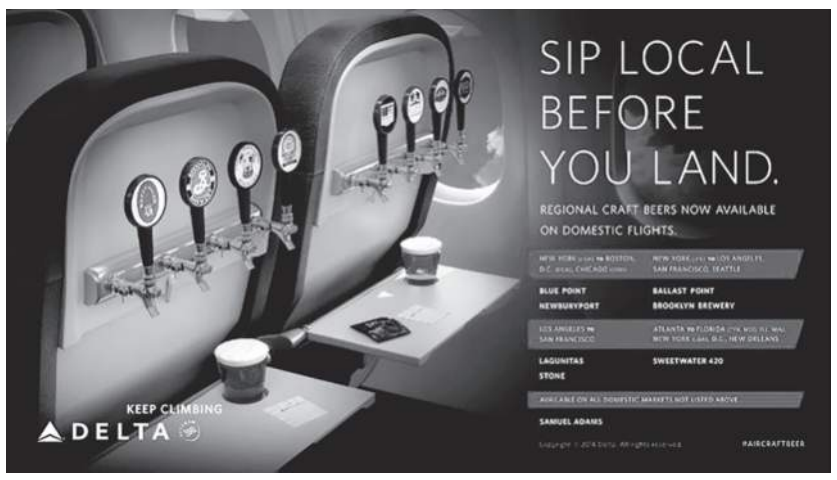
■ **Keynotes School of Music**, a music school, will purchase music instruments to provide music education as an afterschool activity.

■ **OceanSoul Unlimited**, an adventure company that offers paddle sports, sailing and canoe tours, will purchase paddleboards and paddles to help promote fitness, fun and education to kids.

■ **Pink Mango**, a retail establishment that sells clothing and accessories, will expand on its plus sizes and provide a variety of styles at affordable prices.

Bank of Hawaii is committed to fostering economic development and to help new businesses grow. In addition to this grant program, Bank of Hawaii continues to support the Saipan community through grants made by Bank of Hawaii Foundation and through the work of its employees who provide financial education and serve on the boards of local non-profits. ***(BOH)***

Delta teams recognized by J.D. Power



Regional craft beers now available on Delta. PRNEWSFOTO/DELTA AIR LINES

ATLANTA—Delta Air Lines' Reservations division, Premium Sales and Service, has been recognized for customer service excellence by the J.D. Power Certified Contact Center Program.

"Congratulations to our Delta colleagues in Reservation Sales for achieving the high distinction of J.D. Power Contact Center certification for our Premium Sales and Service groups," said Delta president Ed Bastian. "This recognition is a demonstration of their teamwork and the strides they have made to meet the highest standards of customer service."

The certification signifies that Delta's Premium Sales and Service teams have attained the high benchmark established by J.D. Power for contact center customer service and operational excellence.

The certification process conducted by J.D. Power, the global marketing information services company, took months to complete and required Delta to pass an audit of best practices for contact centers. This included site visits to three of Delta's seven U.S. centers, as well as achieving a minimum score on a comprehensive customer satisfaction survey randomly conducted by J.D. Power.

"We are proud and excited to receive this recognition from J.D. Power for the excellent customer service provided by our Premium Sales and Service specialists," said Charisse Evans, vice president for Delta Reservation Sales and Customer Care. "Because customer surveys were a key component of the certification process, it means a great deal to us that our customers agreed with J.D. Power on the high level of service delivered by our dedicated Reservations team."

To earn J.D. Power certification, centers must perform within the top 20 percent of customer service scores based on criteria that include a specialist's courtesy, job knowledge and concern for the customer, promptness in answering customer calls and a timely resolution of the customer's request or problem. J.D. Power also evaluates the customers' ease in navigating a company's interactive voice response system, the clarity of information provided by the system and the ease of understanding the phone menu prompts.

"Congratulations to the Delta Air Lines Premium Sales and Service team for earning this very demanding certification," said Mark Miller, senior director at J.D. Power. "Our customer experience research shows that Delta's Premium Sales and Service team delivered high agent courtesy and high agent knowledge, and that callers were able to reach an agent quickly." ***(Delta)***

SIDEBAR

Delta taps 7 more craft brews for in-flight offering

ATLANTA—Delta Air Lines this week began stocking its beverage carts with a selection of regional craft beers to bring local options to customers. The move continues the airline's focus on bringing regional food, wine and now beer to the in-flight experience.

Beer from Ballast Point Brewing Company (San Diego), Blue Point Brewing Company (Long Island, NY), Brooklyn Brewery (Brooklyn, NY), Lagunitas Brewing Company (Petaluma, Calif.), Newburyport Brewing Company (Newburyport, Mass.), Samuel Adams (Boston), and Stone Brewing Company (Escondido, Calif.) join SweetWater Brewery (Atlanta) to give all customers on routes within the U.S. a craft beer option.

The selection of regional craft beers are available on Delta's West Coast Shuttle between Los Angeles and San Francisco; between New York-LaGuardia and Boston, Washington-Regan National and Chicago-O'Hare; on Delta's transcontinental routes between New York-JFK and Los Angeles, San Francisco and Seattle; and on flights between Atlanta and New York-LaGuardia, Washington-Reagan National and Dulles, Orlando, Ft. Lauderdale, Miami, Tampa and New Orleans. Samuel Adams is available on all other domestic routes in the U.S. ***(Delta)***

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXIV, Issue No. 244

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com

Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

By PAUL HALPERN
The Philadelphia Inquirer

Paul Halpern is a professor of physics at the University of the Sciences in Philadelphia and the author of Einstein's Dice and Schrodinger's Cat: How Two Great Minds Battled Quantum Randomness to Create a Unified Theory of Physics. He wrote this for The Philadelphia Inquirer.

Einstein shunned phones in favor of quiet reflection and solitude

Today's amazing communication technologies owe much to some of Albert Einstein's greatest discoveries.

For example, the cameras in cellphones and other electronic devices are based on the photoelectric effect, for which Einstein was awarded the Nobel Prize. GPS systems take into account the stretching of time due to gravity, another of Einstein's predictions in his magnificent general theory of relativity. Given that many scientists embrace technology, it is interesting to speculate what kind of phone or device Einstein would be using if he were alive today. Would Einstein be texting, tweeting, or video-chatting?

The surprising answer might be none of the above.

By today's standards, Einstein was a loner. He didn't like any kind of phone, which, of course, in his time was a simple landline. Much of his day was spent in silent reflection, save short breaks to discuss ideas with his assistants or to indulge in his passion for music (he loved playing violin).

Sure, he enjoyed fiddling with gadgets. He relished the gift of a compass as a child, and loved tinkering with a microscope given to him at his 50th birthday party. He even invented a kind of refrigerator.

But in terms of communications devices, he liked them as far away as possible. He once declared that he could concentrate best and be most creative "away from the horrible ringing of the telephone," such as on ocean voyages.

In the early 1930s, Einstein spent each summer in a custom-built house in a lakeside village near Potsdam, Germany. The house had no phone. Visitors would write to him in advance or just stop by unannounced. He didn't care if dignitaries surprised him when he was in his pajamas. He argued to his wife that they came to see him, not his clothes.

Einstein loved going sailing, often solo, to be alone with his thoughts and free of intrusions. With the shoreline miles away, and only still waters as company, no one could interrupt his thinking as he pondered theories of nature. He couldn't swim, so whenever he ran into trouble, such as his boat becoming capsized, he waited patiently for a local seafarer to rescue him.

When Einstein relocated to Princeton after the Nazi regime took power in Germany, he became, if anything, even more of a loner.

He spent hours each day barricaded in the upstairs study

See EINSTEIN on Page 11

Internet 'expression' v. freedom of speech

By CHRISTINE M. FLOWERS
Philadelphia Daily News

Christine M. Flowers is a lawyer and columnist for the Philadelphia Daily News. *Readers may send her email at cflowers1961@gmail.com.*

When you write anything for public consumption, and when it ends up on the web in some shape or form, you can be absolutely certain that unless you are the pope (and even when you are) there will be objectionable comments from the peanut gallery. And, despite my almost fanatical devotion to the concept of Free Speech, I've developed a peanut allergy.

That's my fey and not-so-clever way of saying that I'm not a huge fan of the more vitriolic opinions that bubble up from the tarry depths of the Internet, to the extent that I usually ignore them. I used to read almost everything people would write in response to my columns, but that ship-as ill-fated as the Titanic-sailed years ago.

Every now and then, however, word gets back to me about something someone wrote online, and I am reminded of just how foul some human beings can be in their thoughts if not their actual actions. This recently occurred to me when I wrote about statutes of limitations and a pyjamaed, basement-dwelling Neanderthal who spends most of his time cashing mama's Social Security checks lodged a threat against a family member.

I really don't care what they say about me, and I've heard it all, usually from women who believe in choice, namely, the choice to defame women who disagree with them on reproductive matters. But when you start attacking family members, I draw the line in the virtual sand.

That's why I paid particular attention to the oral arguments held this Monday at the Supreme Court concerning Internet "expression" and whether comments can rise to the level of illegal, unconstitutional threats.

It's always interesting to watch the court when it weighs the relative value of speech because so much of our identity as a nation is defined by our ability to express ourselves without constraint. The First Amendment only truly applies to prospective interference by the government, although there are so many quasi-governmental entities in the country that Uncle Sam isn't the only one that gets sued.

In the case before the court, an estranged husband from our own backyard in the Third Circuit had been convicted of threatening his wife, violating a law that barred threats over the Internet. Anthony Elonis, an Allentown native, had claimed that he was just like any rapper out there talking about what he'd like to do to the "ho that did him wrong, dawg..." (As we have come to see, poet laureates are not the ones who are most in need of those First Amendment protections.)

Some of the things that Elonis wrote on his Facebook page were extremely disturbing. But Elonis' attorney argued that even though comments like "And I am not going to rest until your body is a mess/soaked in blood and dying from all the little cuts" could appear threatening (these must be Harvard grads,) it was important to look at the subjective intent of the writer/speaker and not the language's effect on the reader/listener.

Frankly, that's a very dangerous road to start traveling down and it flies in the face of what I learned as a lawyer about the "reasonable man." While it may be difficult to find a reasonable man in this age of expression on steroids, it's necessary to have some kind of standard so that we don't have to wade into the fetid mental waters of the kind of people who think threatening to shoot up a kindergarten is OK (yes, Elonis did that too.)

Not surprisingly, the ACLU and other civil libertarians have come down on the side of the mediocre rapper boy from Allentown and have urged the court not to find Internet threats to be as bad as, say, yelling fire in a movie theater. And the high court itself has made some major mistakes in the past in this area as, for example, when it held that burning a cross is not necessarily "threatening expression." (Tell that to anyone who grew up black in the 1950s.)

As someone who regularly gets attacked for her opinions—and welcomes dancing around in that hot kitchen—I can tell the difference between blowing off steam and real threats. I don't need to get inside the head of every person who wants to see me drawn and quartered, or forced to date Bill Maher, which is obviously equally unpleasant. And I also don't need a psychology degree to perceive true malicious intent when its directed at one of my family members.

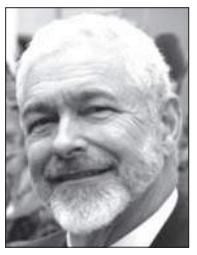
Free speech is a wonderful thing, and an important one. But criminals cannot hide behind the beauty of the First Amendment to shield them from their just deserts. A pissed-off husband with delusions of Eminem grandeur is not the type of person Oliver Wendell Holmes was talking about when he wrote: "I think that we should be eternally vigilant against attempts to check the expression of opinions that we loathe and believe to be fraught with death, unless they so imminently threaten immediate interference with the lawful and pressing purposes of the law that an immediate check is required to save the country."

Or then again, maybe he was.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

President Obama's immigration accountability executive action: How it affects the CNMI

IMMIGRATION FORUM



By MAYA KARA and BRUCE MAILMAN
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Maya Kara is a native of Hungary and comes to the practice of law by way of her interest in Asian history. Bruce Mailman is a native of Bakersfield, California and was a private investigator in California prior to becoming a lawyer. Both have lived and practiced law in the CNMI for over 25 years, Maya in government service and Bruce in private practice. They are married and are partners in the law firm of Mailman & Kara, LLC in Garapan, Saipan.

On Nov. 20 and 21, 2014, President Obama announced his "immigration accountability executive action." The Executive Order introduces a series of measures that are available to the President under his authority as chief executive of the United States. Some of these measures affect how immigration laws are enforced; how immigration benefits are processed; how to further encourage business innovation; and how to welcome immigrants to the United States.

Unfortunately, true institutional reform will have to wait for congressional action. Advocates from every shade of the political spectrum agree that the immigration system needs a thorough overhaul; they just cannot agree on how. The Executive Order addresses a limited number of issues that have been plaguing the immigration system. The first and foremost of these is the presence of over 12 million undocumented aliens, most of whom are working without status and without work authorization.

We will focus this column on how this Executive Order might affect the CNMI.

The DAPA Program

The President's Executive Order creates a new program, DAPA (Deferred Action for Parental Responsibility), to address the issue of millions of undocumented aliens in the U.S. This program potentially safeguards from removal some aliens who are present in the CNMI without status. However, DAPA will not apply to all out of status aliens.

The program will only be open to individuals who:

■ have a U.S. citizen (USC) or lawful permanent resident (LPR) son or daughter as of Nov. 20, 2014. There is no age limit for the child, who can be a minor or adult. It is unclear whether the child must reside in the U.S.

■ have continuously resided in the United States since before Jan. 1, 2010. The CNMI became part of the U.S., for immigration purposes on Nov. 28, 2009, the effective date of the Consolidated Natural Resources Act. All aliens in the CNMI who were present in the CNMI on that date meet this aspect of the qualification. It is unclear at this time whether absence from the CNMI between those dates disqualifies an applicant. We suspect that short term absence, for medical treatment, family emergency or vacation, will not act to disqualify someone who is otherwise eligible. Longer absences may disqualify.

■ are physically present in the United States on Nov. 20, 2014, the date of the President's announcement, and also at the time of applying;

■ have no lawful immigration status on Nov. 20, 2014. This is a critical issue. We have already received inquiries from members of the alien community with CW or parole status whether DAPA applies to them. The answer is NO. What is unclear is whether DAPA will apply to aliens who formerly had status, such as CW, and then fell out of status. We will have to wait for further guidance from USCIS on this and other unresolved issues.

■ are not an "enforcement priority," which is defined to include individuals with a wide range of criminal convictions (including certain misdemeanors), those suspected of gang involvement and terrorism, recent unlawful entrants, and certain other immigration law violators. As in many other instances involving immigration benefits, those with a criminal record will have a much more difficult time getting a benefit than those with a clean record.

■ present no other factors that would render a grant of deferred action inappropriate; and

■ pass a background check.

DAPA grants will last for three years. The DAPA program should be ready to receive applications within 180 days, or beginning on May 20, 2015. We foresee that DAPA will function much like humanitarian parole, where you need to have a grant of deferment that protects you from being removed from the United States, including the CNMI, but you also must obtain an EAD (Employment Authorization Document) in order to work legally. You will need to have a social security number and pay taxes.

It is important to understand that DAPA does not confer any status on an alien; rather, it is a promise by the U.S. government that ICE will not seek to remove you for three years. It is a life preserver, to keep you from drowning; it is not a boat that will take you to safe harbor. It is a temporary measure to keep families together. A lot can change in three years; you may qualify for a better status; immigration laws may change; DAPA may be renewable. So, if you qualify, we would urge you to apply when the time comes.

Words of caution:

■ The President's action has already been challenged in court, in the form of lawsuits seeking to prevent implementation of the program. These could wipe out the program or, more likely, delay it.

■ The entire program could be reversed by the next President or by congressional action.

■ DAPA, if you qualify, is a course of last resort, when no other lawful means are available to you and you want to remain and work legally in the U.S., including CNMI.

The Extended DACA Program

The original DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) was announced by then-DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano in a memorandum dated June 15, 2012, "Exercising Prosecutorial Discretion with Respect to Individuals who Came to the United States as Children." This memorandum formalized a policy of "deferred action" with regard to enforcement of immigration laws against many of the people who would have benefitted from the DREAM Act, which died in Congress again and again. The Executive Branch acted where the Legislative Branch was unwilling, or unable, to act.

As of July 2014, more than 580,000 undocumented aliens in the U.S. under the age of 30 have received protection from removal under DACA. When DACA was first promulgated in June 2012, there was a flurry of inquiries whether DACA would be applicable or, more correctly, useful to aliens in the CNMI. (We wrote about DACA in our column, "Has Continually Resided in the United States: Deferred Action and the CNMI," *Saipan Tribune*, June 26, 2012, available at http://tinyurl.com/lzdrr5n.) The answer at that time was that, yes, DACA applied in the CNMI, but it was not useful to more than possibly a handful of young adults who had spent time in the mainland U.S. before coming to the CNMI. In the last two and a half years, our office did not entertain a single client who qualified under DACA. Here are the reasons why:

The original DACA contained the following qualifications for undocumented aliens residing in the United States, including the CNMI. The alien must have:

■ Come to the United States under the age of 16;

■ Continuously resided in the United States for at least five years preceding the date of the memorandum (June 12, 2012) and been present in the United Sates on the date of the memorandum (June 12, 2012) (emphasis added);

■ Been currently in school, or graduated from high school, or obtained a general education development certificate, or be an honorably discharged veteran of the Coast Guard or Armed Forces of the United States:

Not have been convicted of a felony offense, a significant misdemeanor office, multiple misdemeanor offenses, or otherwise pose a threat to national security or public safety; and

■ Not be above the age of 30.

■ Most otherwise qualified aliens residing in the CNMI could not pass the second requirement of five years continuous residence "in the United States." The reason for this was that, for immigration purposes, the CNMI was not considered part of the United States until the effective date of the Consolidated Natural resources Act on Nov. 28, 2009. That means as of June 12, 2012, aliens continuously residing in the CNMI had only been residing in the United States for less than two and one half years. That was two and a half years too short to qualify for DACA. It was not until Nov. 28, 2014, that DACA (in its original 2012 version) would apply for those otherwise qualified.

However, the President's executive order now has amended DACA and made it more broadly available by removing the age cut-off provision. Under the new DACA, applicants can be any age if they meet the other requirements; the eligibility date for arrival date in the United States is moved up from June 12, 2007 to January 1, 2010; and the deferral as well as work authorization will be granted for three years instead of two.

We applaud President Obama for his courage in enacting these measures despite the opposition of a hostile Congress. We must all remember that these are temporary measures to provide for a measure of stability while the United States comes to a resolution with regard to the many issues involving immigration policy. The programs are designed to eliminate the fear of removal and to provide an opportunity for aliens to keep their families together and work legally. The Executive Branch can defer action and decline to remove an individual, but only Congress can determine eligibility for permanent resident status or U.S. citizenship. We must await the action of Congress for a more comprehensive and permanent reform.

The authors are grateful to the Immigration Policy Center (www.immigrationpolicy.org) of the American Immigration Council, and to the American Immigration Lawyers Association (www.aila.org) for information in this column The USCIS website also has detailed information regarding DAPA (http://www.uscis.gov/immigrationaction) and DACA (http://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/consideration-deferred-action-childhood-arrivals-daca).

The information contained in this column is intended as general information only, and not as individual legal advice. Readers should obtain professional legal advice before taking action with respect to their individual situations. Readers may submit questions regarding federalization or immigration issues to the authors by email to lexmarianas@pticom.com. Readers may also e-mail written questions through the Saipan Tribune at editor@saipantribune.com.

EINSTEIN

From Page 10

of his house, working out equations for unified field theories. He gave strict instructions to his wife and secretary that disturbances be kept to a minimum. Sometimes he would feign being sick to ward off visitors. When he went out, he often took quiet walks with his assistants or his close friends such as mathematician Kurt Godel. He loved tete-a-tete chats, and the laughter of children, just not the clamor of phones.

There is a hallowed tradition of great thinkers seeking solitude, from Gautama Buddha, who meditated for many days near a tree until he found enlightenment, to Henry Thoreau, who practiced self-reliance in an isolated cabin on Walden Pond. Philadelphia's "Hermit's Cave," in a quiet part of the Wissahickon, offers an example of such a retreat. Until recently, libraries were chapels of silence, permitting anyone to find a haven for reading and reflection (the strict rules seem to have eased up a bit in many libraries).

Today we are in the midst of a global experiment with instantaneous interconnection. Save isolated wilderness areas, now almost anywhere in the world solitude has become a choice, not a necessity. Yet, to support creative thinkers who might sometimes need time for reflection, we need to maintain the option of periods of disconnection. Just as Walden Pond is now protected land, we need to preserve Waldens of the mind.

Einstein began his career working at a patent office in Switzerland. He was so efficient that he had plenty of time to think about deep questions in physics—leading to his development of the special theory of relativity. Suppose he were working at such an office today and was deluged by e-mails, texts, and calls from his superiors—not only on the job but also after hours. What if they told him that if he didn't respond promptly he could be fired? Where would he find the silent space needed for his creative efforts?

Our society is fortunate today that it has so many opportunities for people connecting electronically. However, following Einstein's lead, we need to offer space for solitude and self-reflection as well. The off button must always be there as a choice.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

It's historic!

It's a historic for the people of Tinian to have its first *manhoben* mayor. Let us all embrace our first *manhoben* mayor and help him to be the first manhoben to lead our children into the future. Congratulations, Mayor Joey Patrick San Nicolas on your success. Now make us proud parents, friends, and people of Tinian. Let us help you accomplish your plans to develop our economy and improve the quality of our lives.

Congratulation, too, to Sen. Jude U. Hofschneider, Sen. Cruz, Rep. Aldan and Council members Ray Cing, Diana Borja, and Edwin Hofschneider.

Now that you have been chosen, go and deliver your promise to work together for all the people of Tinian.

Lastly, I would like to congratulate Gov. Eloy Inos and Lt. Gov.-elect Ralph Torres on their success. Now that you have been chosen by the people of the CNMI, go and deliver your promises to the people of the CNMI.

Huraaah! and Biba Marianas!

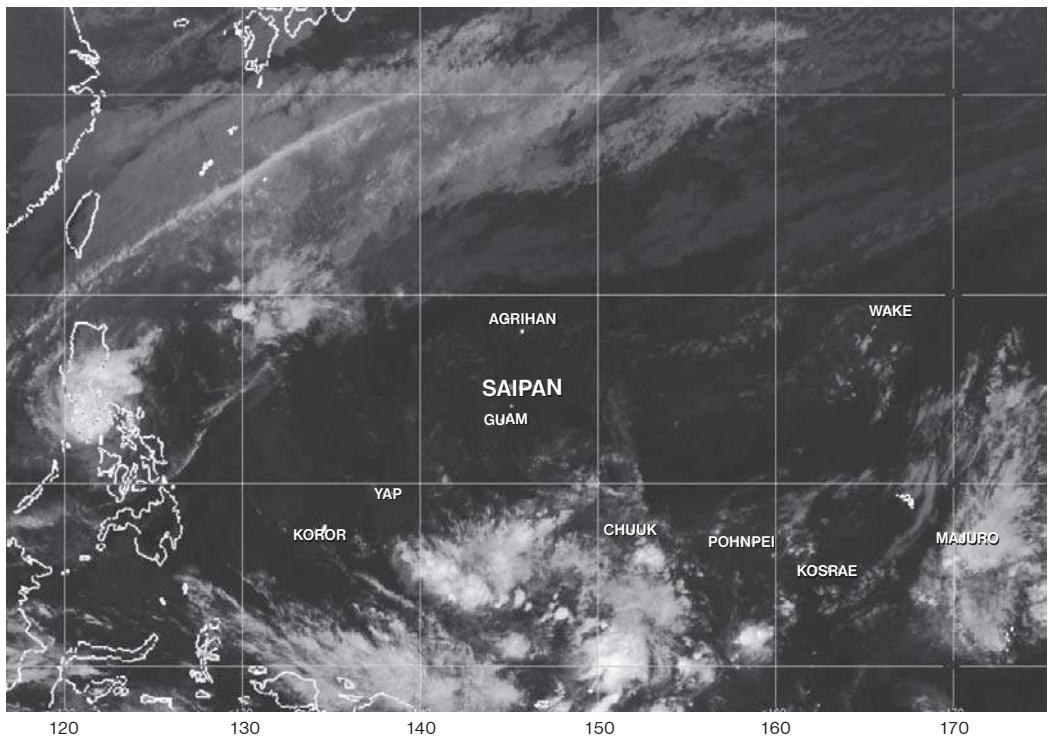
Winnie Atalig
San Jose, Tinian

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2014
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A shear line extends southwestward from northwest of Wake Island near 25N172E to beyond 130E at 16N. Cloudiness and rain are found along and up to 200 miles northwest of this boundary. Widespread cloudiness and patchy rain are found near Iwo To Island near an old frontal boundary northwest of a line from 20N130E to 25N148E.A surface trough extends eastward from near 5N130E to a circulation centered southeast of Yap near 2N148E to end near EQ154E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are occurring south of Koror and Yap south of a line from 3N130E to 3N140E to 1N144E and southwest of Chuuk within 200 miles of a line from 5N142E to 4N150E to 1N154E. Trade-wind convergence is generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms just east and south of Majuro within 200 miles of a line from 2N171E to 6N175E to 6N180E and well southeast of Wake Island between 12N and 16N from 172E to 177E. An upper-level low near 16N166E is triggering isolated thunderstorms south of Wake Island between 15N and 18N from 163E to 167E.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

Micronesia

Guam And Rota	Thundershowers	▲84	▼80
Palau	Partly Cloudy	▲85	▼79
Yap	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼79
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼79
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼77
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	▲85	▼80
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼81

Around the Globe

Auckland	Showers	▲70	▼59
Beijing	Sunny	▲39	▼20
Hong Kong	Mostly Sunny	▲71	▼61
Honolulu	Sunny	▲82	▼69
London	Mostly Sunny	▲43	▼31
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲75	▼55
Manila	Thunderstorms	▲78	▼75
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	▲70	▼53
Miami	Mostly Sunny	▲77	▼62
New York	Mostly Cloudy	▲38	▼36
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	▲55	▼38
Paris	Showers	▲43	▼34
Pusan	Rain	▲47	▼30
Rome	Sunny	▲59	▼41
Salem	Cloudy	▲58	▼53
San Francisco	Showers	▲65	▼57
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	▲37	▼20
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	▲49	▼39
Washington, DC	Cloudy	▲39	▼37

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Tides

Saipan Harbor

3:19 AM	Today	High Tide:	-0.4 Feet
10:20 AM	Today	Low Tide:	1.9 Feet
3:58 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.2 Feet
8:32 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:31 AM	5:47 PM
Wednesday	6:32 AM	5:47 PM
Thursday	6:33 AM	5:47 PM
Friday	6:33 AM	5:48 PM
Saturday	6:34 AM	5:48 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	8:15 PM	8:30 AM
Wednesday	9:05 PM	9:16 AM
Thursday	9:54 PM	9:59 AM
Friday	10:42 PM	10:40 AM
Saturday	11:29 PM	11:19 AM

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Friday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $160. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769.
E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 12, 2014

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA5070	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA5068	8:00am	8:50am	3
UA5068	8:40am	9:30am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
UA5039	2:20pm	4:00pm	6, 7 via Rota
UA5078	3:10pm	4:00pm	1, 5
UA5038	3:10pm	4:00pm	2, 4
UA5040	6:55pm	7:45pm	1, 5
UA5078	8:35pm	9:25pm	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA5044	10:40pm	11:30pm	1, 5

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA5039	2:20pm	2:55pm	6, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA5039	3:25pm	4:00pm	6, 7

SAIPAN-PALAU (ROR)

DL287	6:05am	1:05am+1	2, 6 via NRT

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL287	6:05am	8:40am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6
DL297	4:20pm	7:05pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ604	3:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
7C 3401	4:30pm	8:20pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:10am	6:20am	4, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764A	1:30am	5:30am	4, 7
MU764	1:30am	5:30am	1, 5

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:30am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ606/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5069/PR111	2:45am	4:50pm	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5070/191	4:15am	7:20am	2, 7 via GUM
UA5070/191	4:15am	9:00am	3, 6 via GUM
UA5070/183	4:15am	8:45pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA5070/183	4:15am	9:10pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
DL287/473	6:05am	9:50pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 6 via NRT
UA5071/PR111	6:40am	4:50pm	3 via GUM
UA5071/PR111	7:15am	4:50pm	1, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:00am	9:50pm	3 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:40am	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:40am	9:50pm	1, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5039/183	2:20pm	9:50pm	6, 7 via Rota-GUM
UA5038/183	3:10pm	9:30pm	2 via GUM
UA5078/183	3:10pm	9:30pm	5 via GUM
UA5078/183	3:10pm	9:50pm	1 via GUM
UA5038/183	3:10pm	9:50pm	4 via GUM
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:50pm	Daily via ICN

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

OZ606/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ606/723	2:10am	12:50pm	1 via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/723	2:40am	12:50pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5070/179	4:15am	10:35pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA5068/179	8:00am	10:35pm	3 via GUM
UA5068/179	8:40am	10:35pm	1, 5, 6 via GUM
UA5039/179	2:20pm	10:35pm	6 via Rota-GUM
UA5078/179	3:10pm	10:35pm	1, 5 via GUM
OZ604/749	3:20pm	10:30pm	Daily via ICN

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA5069	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA5071	6:40am	7:30am	3
UA5071	7:15am	8:05am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
UA5039	1:00pm	1:50pm	6, 7
UA5038	1:10pm	2:40pm	2, 4 via Rota
UA5077	1:50pm	2:40pm	1, 5
UA5041	5:35pm	6:25pm	1, 5
UA5077	7:15pm	8:05pm	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA5043	9:20pm	10:10pm	1, 5

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA5038	1:10pm	1:45pm	2, 4

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA5038	2:05pm	2:40pm	2, 4

PALAU (ROR)-SAIPAN

DL298	4:30am	3:00pm	3, 7 via NRT

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL288	8:55pm	1:25am+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
7C 3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ605	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	1:50am+1	3, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:30pm	5:50am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763A	4:30pm	12:30am+1	3, 6
MU763	4:30pm	12:30am+1	4, 7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:55pm	3:10am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ704/603	12:10am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
PR110/UA5041	7:35am	6:25pm	1,5 via GUM
PR110/UA5077	7:35am	8:05pm	3, 6, 7 via GUM
PR110/UA5043	7:35am	10:10pm	1, 5 via GUM
DL172/288	9:40am	1:25am+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 7 via NRT
UA190/5077	9:55am	8:05pm	2, 7 via GUM
UA190/5077	10:00am	8:05pm	3, 6 via GUM
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA184/5071	10:55pm	7:30am+1	3 via GUM
UA184/5071	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5039	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5038	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	4 via GUM-Rota
UA184/5077	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	1 via GUM
UA184/5041	10:55pm	6:25pm+1	1 via GUM
UA184/5077	10:55pm	8:05pm+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5043	10:55pm	10:10pm+1	1 via GUM
UA184/5071	10:59pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM
UA184/5038	10:59pm	2:40pm+1	2 via GUM-Rota
UA184/5077	10:59pm	2:40pm+1	5 via GUM
UA184/5041	10:59pm	6:25pm+1	5 via GUM
UA184/5077	10:59pm	8:05pm+1	2 via GUM
UA184/5043	10:59pm	10:10pm+1	5 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ746/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ750/603	1:10am	2:20pm	Daiily via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ724/605	2:20pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ724/605	2:20pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA180/5071	10:55pm	7:30am+1	3 via GUM
UA180/5071	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 5, 6 via GUM
UA180/5039	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	6 via GUM
UA180/5077	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	1, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA180/5041	10:55pm	6:25pm+1	1, 5 via GUM
UA180/5077	10:55pm	8:05pm+1	3, 6 via GUM
UA180/5043	10:55pm	10:10pm+1	1, 5 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; 7C: Jeju AirETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Mon, Tue,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
12:30NN	12:45NN	Daily
1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
12:00NN	12:15NN	Daily
1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO ROTA

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:45AM	8:15AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:00PM	4:30PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

ROTA TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:45PM	5:15PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

Business

Japan GDP contraction larger than first estimated

TOKYO (AP)—The contraction in Japan's economy last quarter was larger than initially estimated, according to figures released Monday that confirmed a recession ahead of an election on Sunday.

The world's third-biggest economy shrank an annualized 1.9 percent in the July-September quarter compared with the initial estimate of a 1.6 percent contraction. Business and public spending were weaker. In the April-June quarter, the economy dived 7.3 percent.

A sales tax hike to 8 percent from 5 percent on April 1 is the main reason why the economy has faltered after recovering from the last recession in late 2012. Last month, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe postponed a planned increase in the tax to 10 percent that was due in 2015.

Japanese businesses and households frontloaded spending in the first three months of the year to beat the April 1 tax hike. Demand has been weak since then but recently monthly data suggest the worst is over.

"The upshot is that the economy likely returned to growth this quarter," Marcel Thieliant, of Capital Economics, said in a commentary.

Abe last month dissolved parliament and called a snap election, saying he wanted to win a public mandate for the tax hike delay and other policies. He has promised to step down if his Liberal Democratic Party fails to keep its parliamentary majority, but that is unlikely because the opposition is in disarray.

Abe has sought to end years of deflation with heavy public spending and aggressive monetary easing meant to push the economy toward an inflation target of 2 percent. So far, inflation is at less than half that level.

The hope is that expectations of higher prices will lead consumers and businesses to spend more, helping to sustain growth. Abe's government has also promised major reforms to help improve Japan's competitiveness.

On a quarterly basis, the economy shrank 0.5 percent.

The finance ministry also reported Monday that higher income from overseas investments helped Japan to log a current account surplus of 833.4 billion yen ($6.8 billion) in October. It was the fourth straight month of surplus despite a trade deficit.

AP
In this Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2014 photo, a man walks in front of the Bank of Japan headquarters in Tokyo.

China trade growth tumbles in November

BEIJING (AP)—China's export growth tumbled in November and imports contracted unexpectedly in a new sign of weakness in the world's second-largest economy.

Exports rose by a smaller-than-expected 4.7 percent, down from October's 10.6 percent, trade data showed Monday. Imports were forecast to rise but instead shrank by 6.7 percent from a year earlier.

China's economic growth slowed to a five-year low of 7.3 percent in the latest quarter. The ruling Communist Party is trying to steer growth to a more sustainable level but cut interest rates last month, apparently worried the economy was cooling too sharply.

The decline in trade numbers probably was due in part to a crackdown aimed at ending misreporting by traders as a way to evade Chinese capital controls, but also indicates the underlying activity is weakening, said Julian Evans-Pritchard of Capital Economics in a report.

"The magnitude of the fall suggests that underlying export growth has weakened too," said Evans-Pritchard. As for imports, "the sharp fall also hints at a further cooling of domestic demand."

Weaker domestic demand will frustrate Chinese planners who are trying to reduce reliance on trade and investment and nurture more self-sustaining growth based on retail spending and other domestic consumption.

The decline in imports caused China's global trade surplus to widen by 60 percent over a year earlier to $54.5 billion.

For US unemployed, job market hits a turning point

WASHINGTON (AP)—Look past the booming November job gain of 321,000 reported Friday—the best figure in three years in the strongest year for U.S. hiring since 1999.

The job market has reached a new milestone on its road to full health: For the first time since the Great Recession ended 5 1/2 years ago, America's unemployed are now as likely to be hired as to stop looking for a job.

It means that employers have grown confident enough to fill more job vacancies. And it means the unemployed are now less likely to succumb to frustration.

The hiring surge owes much to solid consumer spending—on items like cars, electronics and restaurant meals. That, in turn, has given businesses the means to step up investment in machinery, computers and facilities. Thanks to such spending, the economy grew at a 4.3 percent annual pace from April through September—the healthiest six-month spurt since 2003. Employers have responded by adding a robust average of 241,000 jobs a month this year.

For each month, the government estimates the proportion of the unemployed who found work and the proportion who stopped looking. In November, 23 percent of people who were out of work the previous month found jobs, and the same percentage gave up looking. (The figures are three-month averages, intended to smooth out volatility.)

That was the highest percentage of the unemployed to find work in any month since the recession officially ended in June 2009. A year ago, fewer than 19 percent of the unemployed were finding jobs.

The increase marks the first such sustained improvement since the recession ended. This year's acceleration in hiring has been potent enough to finally soak up a significant proportion of the jobless. During the first four years of the recovery, businesses had hired at a rate that was merely enough to keep up with population growth.

The brightening picture has been a relief for people like Kersten Higgins, who had begun job hunting in July after graduating from law school. She didn't get a single interview until November, when she got four.

Office conflict should have been addressed long ago

YOUR OFFICE COACH

By MARIE G. MCINTYRE
McClatchy-Tribune News Service

Marie G. McIntyre is a workplace coach and the author of Secrets to Winning at Office Politics. *Send in questions and get free coaching tips at http://www.yourofficecoach.com, or follow her on Twitter @officecoach.*

Q: Two of my employees are refusing to communicate with each other. About three months ago, "Anna" and "Pam" got into an argument that ended in a shouting match. Their screaming and yelling could be heard by everyone in the department. Since then, they have gone out of their way to avoid interacting.

Anna accuses Pam of being bossy and interfering with her job. Pam says she can't stand Anna's attitude and wants nothing to do with her. This ongoing conflict has disrupted the flow of work and created tension in the office.

I have told both employees that disciplinary action will be taken if this continues, but their relationship just seems to keep getting worse. What should I do?

A: Has it occurred to you that three people are responsible for this problem? Anna and Pam may be squabbling like childish brats, but you're the one who is tolerating this disruptive behavior. If you were acting like a manager instead of a fretful bystander, their juvenile antics would have ended long ago.

You say "disciplinary action will be taken if this continues," but I wonder what you're waiting for. The proper time for discipline was after the initial shouting match, when both parties should have been given a documented warning and sent home. Considering their subsequent performance, corrective action could have been administered at any time.

So instead of wasting another day, you should immediately order these feuding colleagues to cease all forms of disruptive conduct, including pouting and sulking. From now on, regardless of their feelings, they must consistently interact in a polite and cooperative manner. Any return to their previous behavior will result in a final warning which could lead to termination.

Once these two stop behaving like middle-school "mean girls", you can begin to explore the underlying cause of their frustration. But no resolution can be reached until Anna and Pam start acting like professional adults, and you start being a boss.

Q: When my supervisor invited me to make comments on my performance appraisal form, I wrote that I felt bullied and victimized. I also said he was not giving me the same opportunities as my coworkers. However, I now feel that those remarks were too harsh, so I would like to retract them. How should I go about this?

A: Since your supervisor is obviously aware of these comments, you can simply tell him about your change of heart and ask how the form might be amended.

For example: "I wanted to talk with you about my remarks on the appraisal form. I was pretty upset at the time and said some things that don't reflect how I really feel. Because I would hate for those comments to be part of the permanent record, I would like to see how we can get them removed."

If your boss is a conscientious manager, he may ask about the reason for your previous feelings. But since those observations did not cast him in a very favorable light, he should be quite willing to help you erase them.

Nation

Survivors gather to remember Pearl Harbor attack

PEARL HARBOR, Hawaii (AP)—Veterans who survived the Pearl Harbor attack that launched the United States into World War II attended Sunday's 73rd anniversary ceremony with the help of canes, wheelchairs and motorized scooters.

Wearing purple orchid lei, about 100 Pearl Harbor and World War II survivors attended the ceremony overlooking a memorial that sits atop sunken battleship USS Arizona. Many of them arrived well before the sun came up.

This year's anniversary of the Japanese attack is the 10th consecutive one that USS Utah survivor Gilbert Meyer attended. But it's getting harder for Meyer, 91, to travel to Hawaii from San Antonio.

Asked if he planned to attend next year's anniversary, he responded with a chuckle, "That's like asking me if I'll still be alive."

Harold Johnson, 90, is making it a goal to attend the 75th anniversary, even though traveling from Oak Harbor, Washington, isn't always easy. "I've got a little scooter that's a real life saver," the USS Oklahoma survivor said.

Johnson had been aboard the Oklahoma for just six months on Dec. 7, 1941, looking forward to a day off and a "date with a little Hawaiian girl." He was shining his shoes when the first alarm went off, he recalled.

"Three months later I ran into her in town in Honolulu," he said of his date. "She was mad at me because I stood her up."

AP

A Navy sailor escorts Navy veteran and Pearl Harbor survivor John Chapman during a ceremony to mark the 73rd anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Sunday, Dec. 7, 2014, at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

For many of the roughly 2,000 survivors who remain, there are also more painful memories.

Keynote speaker Gen. Lori Robinson, commander of Pacific Air Forces, told the crowd of several thousand about four of the nine remaining survivors of the USS Arizona. Don Stratton, 92, of Colorado Springs, Colorado, and Lauren Bruner, 94, of La Mirada, California, were two of six men who escaped the inferno that engulfed the forward half of the ship by negotiating a line, hand over hand, about 45 feet in the air, despite burns to more than 60 percent of their bodies. John Anderson, 97, of Roswell, New Mexico, was ordered off the ship, but he didn't want to leave behind his twin brother, Delbert. Even though he was forced into a small boat that took him to Ford Island, he commandeered an empty boat and returned to the Arizona to rescue three shipmates. But he never found his brother.

"When the Arizona sank, she took with her 1,177 sailors and Marines," Robinson told the crowd, which included Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer and Hawaii Gov. David Ige.

Robinson also highlighted the sacrifices of the Honolulu Fire Department, which was dispatched to respond after receiving the alarm at 8:05 a.m. "Without knowing it, the Honolulu Fire Department was going to war," she said. "Three firefighters would never return, and six others would be seriously injured."

The ceremony also featured a Japanese peace prayer, a Hawaiian blessing and a moment of silence at 7:55 a.m., the minute the bombing began. F-22s from the Hawaii Air National Guard 199th Fighter Squadron and Air Force 19th Fighter Squadron conducted a flyover.

Later in the afternoon, the four USS Arizona survivors planned to visit the memorial for a toast to their fallen shipmates with a glass of sparkling wine given to their survivors association by President Gerald Ford, using glasses that are replicas of the ones on the ship. After the toast, divers would place one of the glasses at the base of the Arizona's gun turret four. It's where ashes of 38 Arizona survivors are interred.

This year's anniversary will likely be the last one Ervin Brody, 91, of Houston attends. "Expenses are getting up there and we're retired," he said. "A lot of us figure this will be the last."

Ohio deaths renew calls for lookalike guns action

CINCINNATI (AP)—Twice in less than four months, police in Ohio have opened fire with real bullets on young people carrying lookalike guns, raising anguished questions about what could have prevented the deadly encounters.

The questions have been raised before: after the death last year of a 13-year-old California boy carrying what a sheriff's deputy thought was an AK-47 assault rifle, after the 2012 shooting in a Texas middle school hallway of a 15-year-old student holding an air gun that resembled a Glock, and after the 2006 shooting of a 15-year-old Florida student with a pellet gun that looked to police like a 9mm handgun.

Such deadly cases, while rare, have led to laws and legislation in states and cities across the country. But some gun and law enforcement experts are skeptical about how effective they are.

Criminals, they say, could disguise real guns. And realistic lookalikes remain widely popular among youths who use them for both play and competitions, they say. Pellet and air guns are also popular among people who use them for target practice or hunting small game.

"Anything we can do to make police and the public safer is positive, but let's not pass laws that provide a false sense of security or are unenforceable," said Sgt. Ed Buns, a veteran weapons trainer for the city of Hamilton's police department near Cincinnati.

AP

In a Wednesday, Nov. 26, 2014 file photo, a fake handgun taken from 12-year-old Tamir Rice, who was fatally shot by Cleveland police, is displayed after a news conference in Cleveland.

State Rep. Alicia Reece, D-Cincinnati, said the Aug. 5 police shooting of 22-year-old John Crawford III in a suburban Wal-Mart store and the Nov. 22 police shooting of 12-year-old Tamir Rice in Cleveland make it clear that action is needed. Her bill would require lookalike guns to be brightly colored.

"This bill is but one small step in addressing this tragedy and helping to prevent future deadly confrontations with someone who clearly presents little to no immediate threat or danger," said Reece, who leads the Ohio Legislative Black Caucus. Both Crawford and Rice were black.

Associated Press research found at least 20 deaths involving lookalike guns mistaken by police for actual firearms across the country in the last two decades, dating to the 1994 slaying by a housing police officer of a 13-year-old New York City boy. The most comprehensive national study on the topic of their involvement in police encounters was a 1990 federal report that found more than 100 cases in the previous five years in which police responded with force.

National Conference of State Legislatures records show that at least 12 states, along with Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico, have laws restricting sales or uses of imitation firearms. New York City and many other municipalities have their own ordinances on lookalike guns. Minnesota passed a state law in 1988 after a series of toy gun cases including a fatal police shooting, but an AP check with state court officials found no record of any prosecutions under the statute.

The laws' approaches vary: some require the lookalikes to be brightly colored, others set up stiff penalties for those who use lookalikes in alarming or criminal behavior.

"The two recent tragedies in Ohio are unfortunate examples of a trend we will continue to see unless we change our laws to make imitation guns distinguishable from real firearms," said California Sen. Kevin de Leon, D-Los Angeles, who sponsored state law signed this year requiring bright colors and fluorescent strips for lookalikes.

Berkeley protesters march again after an unruly night

BERKELEY, Calif. (AP)—A second night of protest against police killings of unarmed black men in Missouri and New York turned violent again in Berkeley as some demonstrators threw explosives at officers, assaulted each other and shut down a freeway, police said.

Sunday's protest began peacefully on the University of California, Berkeley campus. But as protesters marched through downtown Berkeley toward the neighboring city of Oakland, someone smashed the window of a Radio Shack. When a protester tried to stop the vandalism, he was hit with a hammer, Officer Jennifer Coats said.

Some of the protesters made their way to a freeway in Oakland and blocked traffic. The California Highway Patrol said some tried to light a patrol vehicle on fire and threw rocks, bottles and an explosive at officers. Highway patrol officers responded with tear gas.

The highway patrol said it was making arrests but no figures were available.

On Saturday night, three officers and a technician were hurt and six people were arrested when a similar protest turned unruly. The most serious injury was a dislocated shoulder, Berkeley police said.

The demonstrations were the latest of several in the Bay Area—and the nation—in recent days to protest grand jury decisions in Missouri and New York not to indict while police officers in the deaths of two black men.

Seven people were arrested in Seattle Saturday night after protesters threw rocks at police and attempted to block a highway. Politicians on both sides of the aisle have been calling for calm while activists push for police reforms. NAACP president Cornell William Brooks, appearing on CBS' "Face the Nation," called for outfitting police with body-worn cameras and changing law enforcement policy.

"We have to change the model of policing," Brooks said.

Asia

No major damage in Philippine typhoon; 3 dead

AP
A Filipino man clears away debris from the remains of his damaged home as strong waves from Typhoon Hagupit battered a coastal village in Legazpi, Albay province, eastern Philippines on Monday, Dec. 8, 2014.

LEGAZPI, Philippines (AP)—Typhoon Hagupit weakened Monday, a day after it left at least three people dead and sent more than a million others into shelters, sparing the central Philippines the massive devastation that a monster storm brought to the region last year.

Shallow floods, damaged shanties and ripped off tin roofs were a common sight across the region, but there was no major destruction after Hagupit slammed into Eastern Samar and other island provinces.

It was packing maximum sustained winds of 120 kilometers (75 miles) per hour and gusts of 150 kph (93 mph) on Monday, considerably weaker from its peak power but still a potentially deadly storm, according to forecasters.

The typhoon, which made landfall in Eastern Samar late Saturday, was moving slowly, dumping heavy rain that could possibly trigger landslides and flash floods.

Traumatized by the death and destruction from Typhoon Haiyan last year, more than 1 million people fled to more than 1,000 emergency shelters and safer grounds.

Hagupit (pronounced HA'-goo-pit) was moving across a string of island provinces and would be near the bustling capital, Manila by early Tuesday, according to government forecasters.

Manila Mayor Joseph Estrada said more than 3,000 residents of a shantytown on the edge of Manila Bay have been evacuated due to possible storm surges.

"We've prepared and trained for this," Estrada told The Associated Press, adding his greatest fear was widespread flooding.

Like villagers in the central Philippines, Estrada said Manila residents were readily moving to safety because they're still haunted by troublesome memories of Haiyan's devastation last year.

"That's still very fresh in their minds," he said of Haiyan's tsunami-like storm surges and killer winds left thousands of people dead and leveled entire villages, most of them in and around Tacloban. Metropolitan Manila has a population of more than 12 million people.

Two people, including a baby girl, died of hypothermia in central Iloilo province Saturday at the height of the typhoon, disaster-response agency chief Alexander Pama told a news conference. Another person died after being hit by a falling tree in the eastern town of Dolores, where the typhoon first made landfall, according to Interior Secretary Mar Roxas.

Displaced villagers were asked to return home from emergency shelters in provinces where the danger posed by the typhoon had waned, including Albay, where more than half a million people were advised to leave evacuation sites.

Nearly 12,000 villagers, however, will remain in government shelters in Albay because their homes lie near a restive volcano.

While officials expressed relief that the typhoon had not caused major damage, they were quick to warn that Hagupit—Filipino for "smash" or "lash"—was still on course to cross three major central Philippine islands before starting to blow away Tuesday into the South China Sea.

Several typhoon-lashed eastern villages isolated by downed telephone and power lines were out of contact, Welfare Secretary Dinky Soliman said.

Army troops deployed to supermarkets and major roads in provinces in the typhoon's path to prevent looting and chaos and clear debris, all of which slowed the government's response to Haiyan last year.

US hands over senior Taliban commander to Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (AP)—The U.S. military in Afghanistan has handed over three Pakistani detainees to Islamabad, including one who Pakistani intelligence officers said is a senior Taliban commander long wanted by the Pakistani government.

The transfer of Latif Mehsud, a close confidante of the former head of the Pakistani Taliban, underlines the improving relations between the U.S., Pakistan and Afghanistan. Pakistan has long demanded that Afghanistan hand over militants operating in its territory, and the issue was a source of sharp tension between Pakistan and former Afghan President Hamid Karzai.

The U.S. did not name the prisoners but two Pakistani intelligence officials say Mehsud was among them. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the media.

The U.S. said in a statement Sunday that the transfer happened Saturday.

Mehsud

"Yesterday, acting on behalf of the United States Government, we transferred custody of three Pakistanis held in U.S. custody in Afghanistan to Pakistan. This followed consultations between the United States and Pakistan and after receiving appropriate assurances. We cannot comment on the identities of the detainees," the U.S. military said.

The military said the Afghan government was not involved in the transfer. A spokeswoman for Afghan President Ashraf Ghani said Mehsud was not in Afghan custody at the time and that they were gathering information about his release. The Pakistani Foreign Ministry referred all questions to the Interior Ministry, which could not be reached for comment.

Mehsud was captured in October of last year by American forces. He was a driver for the former Pakistani Taliban head, Hakimullah Mehsud, and eventually became a trusted deputy to the militant commander, who was killed in November of last year in an American drone strike.

Newly-elected Afghan President Ashraf Ghani visited Pakistan in November. The visit was seen as an attempt to repair ties with Pakistan, which has long had a rocky relationship with Afghanistan. Former Afghan president Karzai repeatedly accused the Pakistani government of harboring militants who launched cross-border attacks.

Part of the reason for the improved ties has been a military operation launched in June by the Pakistani military in the North Waziristan tribal area, something long demanded by the United States. North Waziristan is home to both local and al-Qaida-linked militants.

Meanwhile, there was conflicting information about a possible drone strike in Pakistan's rugged tribal region. Four Pakistani intelligence officers said a suspected U.S. drone fired two missiles at a compound in the village of Khara Tanga in the Datta Khel area of North Waziristan and that a top al-Qaida-linked Pakistani Taliban leader, Omar Farooq, was possibly killed in the strike. But other military officials denied there was any drone strike in the region.

17 killed in Nepal bus accident

KATMANDU, Nepal (AP)—An overcrowded bus has plunged off a mountain road in Nepal, killing at least 17 people and injuring 50 more, police said Monday.

Police official Kesh Bahadur Shahi said the bus veered off the road near Pokharakada village Sunday night and rolled 600 meters (about 2,000 feet) down a slope.

Rescuers pulled out 14 bodies while three more died at a hospital. There were 67 people on the bus, which had 38 seats.

The bus was driving on a narrow mountain road during the night when the accident happened about 400 kilometers (250 miles) west of the capital, Katmandu.

Rescuers worked all night to help the injured passengers and bring the bodies to the main road, police said.

The injured are recovering in hospitals in nearby towns and a dozen of them are in critical condition, they said.

Bus accidents in Nepal are generally blamed on poorly maintained vehicles and roads.

Indian police arrest Uber driver accused of rape

NEW DELHI (AP)—Indian police on Sunday arrested a driver from the international taxi-booking service Uber for allegedly raping a young woman in the capital.

Shiv Kumar Yadav, 32, was arrested in his hometown of Mathura, about 160 kilometers (100 miles) south of New Delhi, where the rape allegedly took place Friday, police officer Jag Niwas said.

The woman, who works at a finance company, was returning from a dinner engagement Friday night and used the mobile app Uber to hire a cab to drive her home, said another New Delhi police officer, Alma Ming.

The Press Trust of India reported that the 26-year-old woman fell asleep during the ride. When she woke up, she found the car parked in a secluded place, and the driver then threatened her and raped her, PTI said.

Police have filed a case against Yadav accusing him of raping the woman, Niwas said. He was being brought to New Delhi and was due to appear in court there on Monday.

Uber said in a statement Saturday that it had suspended the driver's account and was cooperating with authorities. "We are working with the police as they investigate, and will assist them in any way we can to determine what happened," the statement said.

Meanwhile, dozens of students scuffled with officers Sunday as they tried to enter police headquarters in New Delhi to protest the rising incidents of rape in the capital.

"I am here to protest the irregularities and failure of the state machinery, which refuses to acknowledge that rapes happen due to their failure," said Urvashi Joshi, one of the demonstrators.

The protesters, from the All India Students Association, dispersed after an hour-long demonstration.

Indian officials, who for decades did little about sexual violence, have faced growing public anger since the December 2012 fatal gang rape of a young woman on a moving New Delhi bus, an attack that sparked national outrage.

The nationwide outcry led the federal government to rush through legislation doubling prison terms for rapists to 20 years and criminalizing voyeurism, stalking and the trafficking of women. The law also makes it a crime for officers to refuse to open cases when complaints are made.

Official statistics say about 25,000 rapes are committed every year in India, a nation of 1.2 billion people. Activists, though, say that number is just a tiny percentage of the actual number, since victims are often pressed by family or police to stay quiet about sexual assaults.

World

US sends 6 prisoners from Guantanamo to Uruguay

MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay (AP)—Six prisoners held for 12 years at Guantanamo Bay have arrived as refugees in Uruguay, a South American nation with only a tiny Muslim population, amid a renewed push by President Barack Obama to close the prison.

The six men—four Syrians, a Tunisian and a Palestinian—were detained as suspected militants with ties to al-Qaeda in 2002 but were never charged.

They had been cleared for release since 2009 but could not be sent home and the U.S. struggled to find countries willing to take them.

Uruguayan President Jose Mujica agreed to accept the men as a humanitarian gesture and said they would be given help getting established in a country of 3.3 million with a total Muslim population of perhaps 300 people.

"We are very grateful to Uruguay for this important humanitarian action, and to President Mujica for his strong leadership in providing a home for individuals who cannot return to their own countries," U.S. State Department envoy Clifford Sloan said.

Among those transferred was Abu Wa'el Dhiab, a 43-year-old Syrian on a long-term hunger strike protesting his confinement who was at the center of a legal battle in U.S. courts over the military's use of force-feeding.

The Pentagon identified the other Syrians sent to Uruguay on Saturday as Ali Husain Shaaban, 32; Ahmed Adnan Ajuri, 37; and Abdelahdi Faraj, 33. Also released were Palestinian prisoner Mohammed Abdullah Taha Mattan, 35, and 49-year-old Adel bin Muhammad El Ouerghi of Tunisia.

Uruguay's government issued a statement confirming the arrival, repeating the text of a letter from Mujica to Obama saying they had been subject to "an atrocious kidnapping" at Guantanamo and urging the U.S. to end its 53-year-old embargo of Cuba.

Uruguayan officials gave no other details Sunday on the transfers.

Cori Crider, a lawyer for Dhiab from the human rights group Reprieve, praised Mujica, a former leftist guerrilla who himself was imprisoned for more than a decade.

"Despite years of suffering, Mr. Dhiab is focused on building a positive future for himself in Uruguay," said Crider, who traveled to Montevideo to meet with him and was concerned about his health after the hunger strike. "He looks forward to being reunited with his family and beginning his life again."

Crider said that Dhiab was eating and that she had given him his wife's telephone number. "He is obviously tired and he is not 100 percent healthy just yet but there was a sound, that kind of indescribable sound of hope in his voice in a way that just hadn't been there at all."

Ramzi Kassem, a lawyer for Faraj, said he was "deeply grateful" to Uruguay for accepting the prisoner.

"By welcoming our client and the others as refugees and free men, not as prisoners, Uruguay has shown that it truly possesses the courage of its convictions," Kassem, a law professor at the City University of New York, said in an interview from Panama.

Uruguay already has taken in 42 Syrian civil war refugees, who arrived in October, and has said it will take about 80 more.

They are coming to what may be the only country in the Americas without an Islamic mosque, said Tamar Chaky, director of the Islamic Cultural Organization of Uruguay. He promised that the local Muslim community would welcome them, but said there had been no contact with the government.

The U.S. has now transferred 19 prisoners out of Guantanamo this year, all but one of them within the last 30 days, and 136 remain, the lowest number since shortly after the prison opened in January 2002. Officials say several more releases are expected by the end of the year.

Obama administration officials had been frustrated that the transfer took so long, blaming outgoing Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel for not approving the move sooner. They said after Mujica agreed to take the men in January, the deal sat for months on Hagel's desk, awaiting his signature as required by law. The Pentagon didn't send the notification of the transfer to Congress until July.

Body of slain South African hostage heading home

JOHANNESBURG (AP)—Pierre Korkie was supposed to be released Sunday from 18 months of captivity in Yemen under a deal struck by an aid group.

Instead, his widow is mourning her "dearest friend and companion ... torn from me and the children" when he was killed Saturday along with American photojournalist Luke Somers during a U.S.-led rescue attempt. Ten al-Qaida miltants also were slain in the raid, Yemeni security officials said.

About 40 U.S. special operations forces were involved in the half-hour rescue attempt in Shabwa province, which followed U.S. drone strikes in the area east of the capital of Sanaa, U.S. officials said. After a firefight with militants, the rescuers eventually reached the men and found them alive but gravely wounded. They both died shortly after as medics tried to save them.

Korkie's body is being flown back to South Africa and is scheduled to arrive Monday, the government said. Yolande Korkie said in a statement that will help her and the couple's two children, Peter and Lize, reach "some sort of closure."

The Yemeni security officials who confirmed the deaths of the al-Qaida militants spoke Sunday on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to brief reporters.

President Barack Obama said he ordered the raid because Somers was believed to be in "imminent danger." On Thursday, al-Qaida released a video showing Somers and threatening to kill him in three days if the U.S. did not meet the group's unspecified demands.

No American forces were killed or seriously injured in the raid. Yemen's government said four of its forces were wounded.

Korkie was kidnapped in the Yemeni city of Taiz in May 2013, along with his wife, Yolande, who was doing relief work there. She was released in January without ransom as a result of negotiations by the South African humanitarian relief group Gift of the Givers.

Korkie

Before the rescue attempt, tribal leaders in the Yemeni city of Aden were preparing to fetch Korkie. His captors dropped their ransom fee of $3 million after realizing that Korkie and the negotiators had no money. Instead, Gift of the Givers had raised a $200,000 "facilitation fee" for the tribal leaders working directly with the al-Qaida militants to release Korkie.

"I think they realized after 11 months that we were not lying," said Imtiaz Sooliman, founder of the relief group. "How can a teacher from an ordinary South African family raise that kind of money? He's an ordinary guy from a farm."

In her statement, Yolande Korkie chose not to blame anyone for her husband's death.

"Will we win anything if we hate and accuse? Will this return Pierre to us? No," she said.

"So today we choose to forgive. We choose to love. We choose to rejoice in the memories of Pierre and keep him alive in our hearts," she added.

The health of the 56-year-old teacher had deteriorated rapidly in captivity. He suffered partial deafness, a hernia, kidney damage and problems with his urinary system.

Gift of the Givers came to the aid of the Korkies after it learned the couple had been kidnapped where the group ran a famine relief program. Sooliman says the al-Qaida militants at first believed they were Americans.

A Yemeni national working for Gift of the Givers led the negotiation with al-Qaida, working with Ebrahim Ebhrahim, South Africa's former deputy foreign minister, and tribal leaders.

"We said, `keep a very soft tone, build trust, build relationships, show them the work we have done,'" Sooliman said.

He said he does not blame the U.S. government, saying it was only trying to save Korkie and Somers.

Yolande Korkie thanked Gift of the Givers and the Yemeni tribes who directly negotiated with his al-Qaida captors.

The South African government said it had sent its "deepest condolences to the family and friends of Mr. Korkie for their loss. Condolences are also conveyed to the family and loved ones of the deceased American hostage."

10th Sierra Leonean doctor dies from Ebola

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone (AP)—Another Sierra Leonean doctor has died from Ebola, the 10th to succumb to the disease, in what the country's chief medical officer on Sunday called a shocking trend.

Dr. Aiah Solomon Konoyeima died Saturday, according to Chief Medical Officer Dr. Brima Kargbo. His death came a day after two other doctors died from Ebola.

Konoyeima worked at a children's hospital in the capital and was treated at the Hastings Ebola Treatment Center.

Because Ebola is transmitted through the bodily fluids of the sick and dead, it is sometimes called the "caretakers' disease." Hundreds of health workers have been infected in this outbreak, which overall has sickened more than 17,500 people, mostly in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Of those, about 6,200 have died.

In all, 11 Sierra Leonean doctors have been infected; only one has survived. That's much higher than an overall fatality rate of 60 percent for hospitalized patients in the three most affected countries, according to the World Health Organization.

Trying to explain why so many doctors have died, Kargbo said doctors may initially try to manage their symptoms at home and seek treatment later than other patients. He described as "shocking the continuing death rate among Sierra Leonean frontline medical doctors."

But the branch of the country's medical association that represents junior doctors has been pushing for better care for infected medical workers.

Syria says Israeli airstrikes hit near Damascus

DAMASCUS, Syria (AP)—Israeli warplanes bombed two areas near Damascus on Sunday, striking near the city's international airport as well as outside a town close to the Lebanese border, the Syrian military said.

Since Syria's conflict began in March 2011, Israel has carried out several airstrikes in Syria that have targeted sophisticated weapons systems, including Russian-made anti-aircraft missiles and Iranian-made missiles, believed to be destined for Israel's arch foe—the Lebanese Hezbollah militant group.

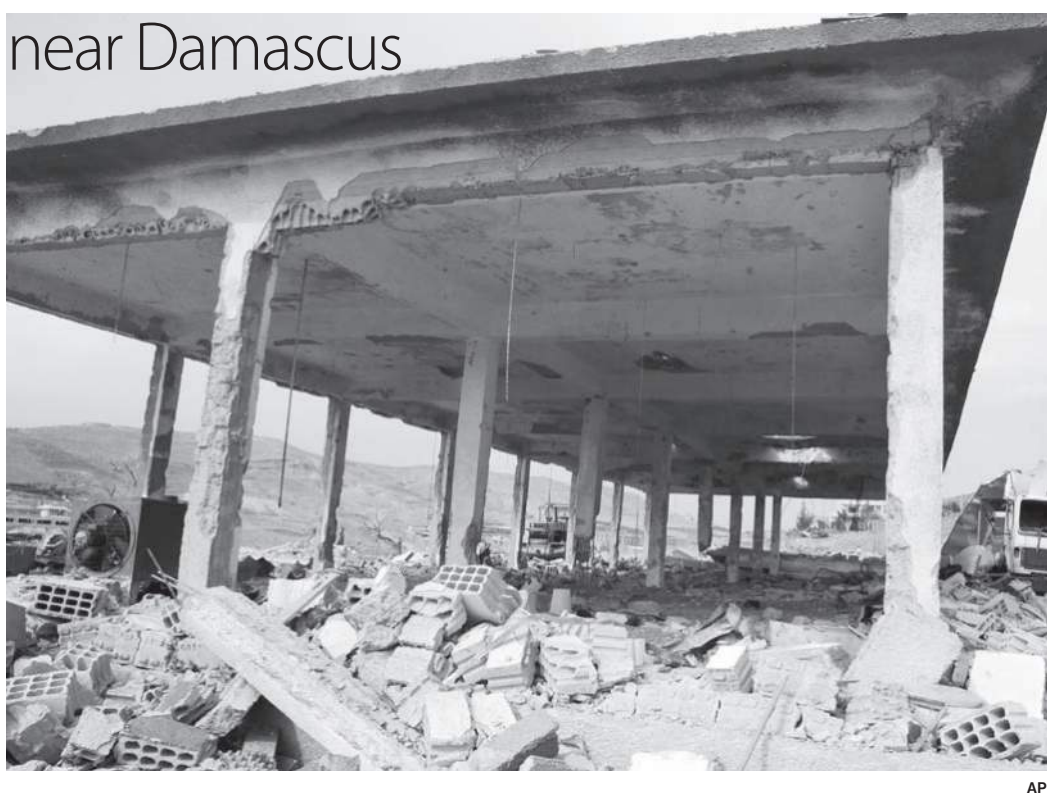
Israel has never confirmed the strikes, and on Sunday the Israeli military said it does not comment on "foreign reports."

The Syrian armed forces' general command said Sunday's "flagrant attack" caused material damage, but did not provide any details on what was hit near the airport or in the town of Dimas, which is northwest of Damascus along the main highway from the capital to the Lebanese frontier.

"This aggression demonstrates Israel's direct involvement in supporting terrorism in Syria along with well-known regional and Western countries to raise the morale of terrorist groups, mainly the Nusra Front," the military said in a statement carried by SANA.

There is no evidence that Israel has provided any support to the Nusra Front, which is al-Qaida's affiliate in Syria.

The director of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, Rami Abdurrahman, said the strike near the Damascus international airport targeted a depot for newly arrived weapons at a military facility that is part of the airport.



AP

This Sunday, May 5, 2013 file photo released by the Syrian official news agency SANA shows a general view of damaged buildings wrecked by an Israeli airstrike, in Damascus, Syria.

Focus

NEW YORK (AP)—At least 400 people are killed by police officers in the United States every year, and while the circumstances of each case are different, one thing remains constant: In only a handful of instances do grand juries issue an indictment, concluding that the officer should face criminal charges.

Indicting a police officer is UNCOMMON OCCURRENCE

Successful prosecutions generally involve officers who have lied about what they've done, tried to cover up their actions, or used excessive force to inflict punishment.

Even as protesters took to the streets Wednesday to decry the failure of a grand jury to indict an officer who used a fatal chokehold on an unarmed man in New York City, a grand jury in South Carolina voted to bring murder charges against Richard Combs, a small town police chief who fatally shot an unarmed man who had come to Town Hall to contest a traffic ticket.

Earlier this year, a grand jury in North Carolina indicted a Charlotte-Mecklenburg officer for fatally shooting a former college football player who was knocking on doors looking for help after he drove his car off the road.

And a police officer in North Augusta, South Carolina, was indicted in August on a charge of misconduct in office after he shot a 68-year-old man who had failed to pull over for a traffic stop, and instead drove home.

It is difficult to generalize about why some cases lead to criminal charges, while others do not, but history shows that jurors may have less sympathy for officers who are guilty of more than just poor judgment during a crisis.

Police who get caught lying tend to get charged. So do those who use force to inflict punishment rather than to protect themselves, or who instigate physical confrontations for reasons that seem personal, rather than professional.

"If an officer goes rogue, really, and is acting personally, and not as an officer of the law, that's when you'll see a criminal charge," said Candace McCoy, a professor at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York.

Philip Matthew Stinson, a professor at Bowling Green State University in Ohio, who has been studying a database of 10,000 police arrests for various types of misconduct, said judges and juries are perfectly willing to throw the book at an officer—if they did something that went beyond their official duties, like robbing a drug dealer or using the authority of their badge to settle a personal score.

"If the jury is sitting there thinking, `Oh my God. A split-second decision like that? What would I have done? Would I have shot the guy?' you're not going to get an indictment," he said.

Second-guessing an officer's judgment can get even harder if there are conflicting accounts about what happened. That was the case in the death of Michael Brown, the unarmed 18-year-old shot to death in Ferguson, Missouri. Witnesses disagreed about whether he was charging the officer when he was killed or was trying to surrender.

When prosecutors do bring charges, they have often been linked to an attempt at a cover-up.

That was the case with the death of Raymond Robair, a 48-year-old handyman who was fatally beaten on a New Orleans street in 2005.

The police officers who initially brought Robair to the hospital claimed that they had found him beneath a bridge. In written reports, they described their encounter with Robair as a medical call.

Witnesses told a different story. They said one of the officers, Melvin Williams, had beaten the man with his baton. An autopsy concluded he died from a ruptured spleen. When interviewed by the FBI, Williams' rookie partner, Matthew Moore, claimed that Robair had hurt himself when he fell down while trying to run away.

An initial police investigation didn't result in any charges, but the case got a second look in 2008 when the FBI began probing killings by New Orleans police officers in the days after Hurricane Katrina.

Federal prosecutors ultimately brought civil rights charges. Williams was convicted and sentenced to more than 21 years in prison. Moore was sentenced to five years for conspiracy and lying to federal agents.

"It's really, really difficult to get a successful state court prosecution," said Mary Howell, a New Orleans civil rights attorney who has represented victims of police misconduct. One reason, she said, is that prosecutors are reluctant to put the police on trial. Another is that grand juries look for a high level of proof that an officer has done wrong.

"It really is one of those rare instances where there is a presumption of innocence," she said.

If getting an indictment is tough, getting a conviction is even harder, especially in deaths involving a shooting.

Over the past 15 years in New York City, nine police officers have been indicted in four shooting deaths.

Only one officer was convicted, and his punishment was light. Officer Bryan Conroy was sentenced to probation and 500 hours of community service in 2005 for the fatal shooting of an unarmed, innocent West African immigrant, Ousmane Zongo, during a warehouse raid in Manhattan.

Two infamous cases ended with acquittals. Jurors exonerated four officers of second-degree murder in the 1999 shooting of Amadou Diallo, another unarmed West African immigrant. A judge in Queens acquitted three detectives in the 2006 shooting of Sean Bell, a groom-to-be who was shot leaving a nightclub the morning of his planned wedding.

One of the nine officers was indicted by a Bronx grand jury for shooting an unarmed, 18-year-old marijuana suspect, Ramarley Graham, following a foot chase in 2012, but the indictment was tossed out by a judge for technical reasons and a new grand jury cleared the officer.

Those acquittals all involved officers who made a snap judgment to fire their weapons after they thought they saw a weapon.

Officers are often seen as being more likely to face charges in fatal beating cases, which often involve more sustained violence during which police might have more time to think about what they are doing. Indictments in shootings are especially rare.

But there are exceptions.

In Oakland, California, an officer was convicted of involuntary manslaughter in 2010 for shooting an unarmed man in police custody on a train station platform. The officer said he meant to use a stun gun on the victim, Oscar Grant, and pulled his firearm by accident.

A similar scenario led to assault charges being filed against an officer in Springfield, Missouri, in July. The officer, Jason Shuck, told an investigator he meant to fire his stun gun at a fleeing panhandler, but shot him with his firearm instead.

McCoy said if policymakers really want to do something about fatal encounters between police and the public, charging more officers with crimes isn't the answer.

"Within police departments, they are doing what we, as a citizenry, have told them to do, which is over-incarcerate, arrest people for minor crimes, and use force—justifiable force—to subdue people.

"And then we wonder why the police have bad outcomes," she said. "This is what the citizenry has told them to do."

AP

FILE- This file image provided by the Los Angeles County Superior Court shows police at the scene where Oscar Grant was shot by former San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit police officer, Johannes Mehserle on an Oakland, Calif., train platform on New Year's Day 2009.

Overdrive

A Mercedes for nearly every budget: CLA at under $30,000

By BARRY SPYKER
MIAMI HERALD

MCT
The new entry-level Mercedes CLA-Class is every bit a Mercedes and yet priced at $29,900.

Q: How do you get a Mercedes into your driveway when your paycheck tells you no? When your common sense says "stay under $30,000"?

A: Easy: The new entry-level Mercedes CLA-Class, every bit a Mercedes and yet priced at $29,900.

The CLA is an all-new model with the premium kind of looks you'd expect from Mercedes, even resembling its more upscale sibling, the CLS. And it's a tad longer and wider than the C-Class, which is on a higher shelf, too, and $5,000 more.

This is a sharp looking animal that, by most observations, dazzles the pants off its wide range of competitors in the looks category. Its profile is aerodynamic with a sloping roof that looks great—but will cost in head room for rear-seat passengers, as is often the case.

The plan here, of course, is for Mercedes to capture the younger folks early and hope they'll become loyal fans who continue to upgrade over the years.

The 2015 CLA, introduced first as a 2014 model, is the first front-wheel-drive Mercedes sold in the U.S., but it's doubtful anyone will have a problem with that.

That's because it's quick off the line and feels like it has plenty of run. And turbo lag, a frequent factor in front-wheel-drive vehicles, is negligible.

The standard CLA gets a turbocharged 2.0-liter inline 4-cylinder engine that generates 208 horses and 258 foot-pounds of torque. While that may not sound like much, it's fun to drive and manages a 0-60 mph in a relatively swift 6.4 seconds. Give an assist to a 7-speed dual-clutch automatic tranny with shift paddles.

And this all adds up to some sweet EPA figures: 26 mpg city and an amazing 38 mph on the open road (I calculated right around 38 on a highway run).

If you must have more punch, opt for the CLA45 AMG version, which gets a twin turbo and puts out 355 horsepower and 32 pound-feet of torque. A quicker-shifting version of the same tranny, plus a few other components, means 0-60 mph in 4.7 seconds. Edmunds' website says it one of the quickest compact sedans you can buy.

Turn to the Sport Mode and the CLA even grunts and growls from the exhaust throughout the shifts.

The sport-tuned suspension means good road feel and tight cornering. And an electric steering system offers great feedback that adds to that human-vehicle connection—you know, that zone where you feel one with the car.

That sporty suspension, however, also means a firmer ride quality. So, yes, along with the road feel you'll also feel the road's negatives: broken pavement and rougher surfaces that make for a somewhat harsher ride.

Inside, it's all Mercedes. No worries that Benz cheaped out because this is the entry level. The materials are top-quality, the fit of components and panels is clean. The center stack is neat and buttons are easily reached.

Not crazy about the nav system display location—mounted high on the dash like an aftermarket item you put there yourself.

Seats are supportive and comfortable. Space up front is adequate, with enough head and leg room for six-footers.

In the backseat, not so much. As aforementioned, the sloping roof impedes on head room back there. And legroom is less than desirable for most, too. On top of that, it's not too easy to enter and exit with small rear doors.

But, if anyone is feeling too cramped, the panorama sun roof might help to open up the space.

Despite cramped quarters in the rear seat, the trunk is wider and deeper than you might expect. A decent 13.1 cubic feet fits the golf clubs or groceries or a couple of less-than-gargantuan suitcases.

If sound systems are your thing, you'll want to opt for the premium package ($2,300), which buys a Harmon/Kardon Logic7 Surround Sound system with satellite radio.

Smart electronics are part of the safety package, too, with a standard collision prevention system that uses radar to detect a potential collision and gets involved, even braking if necessary. Attention Assist monitors drivers' who aren't paying attention or are getting drowsy.

Also standard are a slew of air bags, from knee bag to side bags, plus front-seat side pelvic bags and full length side-curtain air bags.

Optional safety systems include rearview camera, parking sensors and parking-assist, a lane-tracking package and blind-spot warning.

The CLA -Class comes in CLA250, CLA250-4Matic and CLA45 AMG versions. The first is nicely equipped with 8-way power seats, driver memory but no leather—upholstery is premium vinyl which is hard to distinguish from the real thing.

The 4Matic offers all-wheel-drive. The AMG gets bigger wheels (18-inch) and more power.

An optional premium package gets a host of electronics goodies, including a 7-inch nav screen with voice command, 10-gig music server and 6-disc CD changer. A sport package adds a more aggressive front, rear spoiler, sunroof, leather and wood trim inside.

So, to answer the original question, yes—the CLA gets a Mercedes into your driveway for under $30,000.

As for the follow-up question, is it a cheap imitation or the real deal? Considering the sharp exterior, the refined look inside with electronics aplenty, and a turbocharged and nimble driving experience, I don't think you'll have a problem there, either.

NUTS & BOLTS

Mercedes CLA 250: $29,900

As tested: $34,700 (with Premium package $2,300; panorama sunroof, $1,480; blind-spot monitor, $550; 18-inch wheels, $500; and burl walnut wood trim, $325).

UNDER THE HOOD

Air bags have changed greatly since early days

By BRAD BERGHOLDT
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Q: I was wondering how much air bags have changed since all the fuss about them hurting people quite some time back. You now seem to find cars with a half dozen or so. What's changed?—Karen Thomas

A: Your letter provided the opportunity for me to take a fresh look at SRS (Supplemental Restraint System) technology, and there is much to report!

Air bags first appeared domestically on some Ford and GM vehicles in the 1970s, fell out of favor, and then came into wide use in the early 1990s, following Chrysler's lead. With general success and some problems, driver's side and passenger side airbags became required on all passenger cars and light trucks in the late 1990s.

I recall also the concerns many folks had on those early vehicles because the systems employed a powerful one size fits all strategy that could be dangerous to smaller statured adults, children and unbelted occupants. I received many letters asking how to disconnect or turn off airbags and steered clear of helping with that. Rule changes eventually were made to allow car makers to innovate and create systems with dual inflation modes, size and shape variation, and methods to determine and respond to occupant size and position. Newer advanced airbags respond to an occupant classification system, and have been required since 2006. Early occupant classification systems had some bugs, misidentifying items placed on the seat and unusual passenger situations, but that's largely been cleared up.

Current vehicles may be equipped with up to almost a dozen air bags; driver and passenger multistage front, side curtain, torso, knee and center. A diverse array of sensors keeps track of seat occupancy and position, occupant position and weight, vehicle speed, vehicle yaw, as well as impact severity and direction, among others to insure the best level of protection is offered. During a crash this information is calculated in an instant and the correct airbags are deployed or not. Should a passenger be slumped against the door, for example, the torso bag on that side would not be deployed, and a child in the front seat—under 13 years of age are still not recommended—should be detected and the front bag will not deploy. Data is collected and stored in the event of a crash, helping to replay the sequence of events

Seat belt pretensioners are also employed to immediately snug lap and shoulder belts, helping to position the occupant for proper interaction with the airbag. These may be electrically or mechanically deployed, or use a pyrotechnic device to cinch up the belt.

Just as we are about to say airbags have evolved into an almost perfectly orchestrated safety system, we're faced with about 8 million airbag inflators that when subjected to humid/moisture conditions may cause too quick a burn of propellant during a deployment and shoot flying metal parts. These airbags may be found in certain 2000-2010 BMW, Chrysler/Dodge, Ford, GM, Saab, Honda/Acura, Mazda, Mitsubishi, Nissan/Infiniti, Subaru and Toyota/Lexus vehicles. Owners can check here to see if they may be affected: www.safercar.gov/Vehicle+Owners

Toyota recalls cars in Japan, China for air bags

TOKYO (AP)—Toyota is recalling 185,000 vehicles in Japan and 5,000 in China for a possibly defective air bag supplied by Takata, the Japanese manufacturer at the center of an unfolding safety scandal.

Toyota Motor Corp. said Thursday the latest air bag problem was discovered as a result of passenger-side air bags in some Toyota vehicles rupturing when intentionally deployed while being scrapped, a routine procedure under Japanese law for scrapping vehicles.

Toyota said it was not aware of any fatalities or injuries related to the latest problem.

The recall includes vehicles produced from September 2002 through to December 2003, including Corolla models, Noah, Voxy, Mark II and Will.

The driver-side air bags in the affected models are not being recalled because they were not supplied by Takata, said Toyota spokesman Naoki Sumino.

Some 14 million vehicles, including Toyota cars, have been recalled worldwide over Takata air bags, 8 million of them in the U.S. At issue are air bags whose inflators can explode, hurling shrapnel into the passenger compartment. At least five deaths and dozens of injuries have been linked to the problem worldwide.

The U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is pressing for a nationwide recall. The recalls have so far been in high-humidity areas such as the Gulf Coast, because of evidence that moisture can cause the propellant in the air bags to burn too quickly.

Toyota said it still did not know the cause of the air bag problems.

Life & Style

Tom Hanks, Sting among 5 Kennedy Center honorees

WASHINGTON (AP)—An actor hailed as America's "favorite son" and a musical genius who rose from a British shipyard town to make his mark won this nation's highest honors Sunday for influencing American culture through the arts.

Tom Hanks and Sting joined Lily Tomlin, singer Al Green and ballerina Patricia McBride in being awarded this year's Kennedy Center Honors. Top performers and power players from Hollywood, Broadway and Washington gathered to salute them in a gala performance. The show hosted by Stephen Colbert will be broadcast Dec. 30 on CBS.

David Letterman led a series of tributes for Hanks, reciting some of the actor's unforgettable lines from his movies.

"Momma always said life is like a box of chocolates."

"There's no crying in baseball!"

"Houston, we have a problem."

Filmmaker Steven Spielberg, who collaborated with Hanks on many projects, said "America's favorite son" has opened a window on the nation with movies that include "Philadelphia," "A League of Their Own," "Forrest Gump," "Apollo 13" and "Saving Private Ryan."

"Tom loves his country," Spielberg said.

Filmmaker George Stevens Jr., who created the Kennedy Center Honors but said this would be his last time producing the show, said Hanks stands apart as "one of the great actors of his generation or any generation."

Actor and comedian Martin Short led a musical tribute for Hanks, singing "you're our Yankee Doodle dandy," joined by military choirs and musicians.

Before the show, Hanks, 58, joked that a mistake must have been made in the choice for a fifth honoree.

"This is the work I started in 1981, so it all works out OK," he said.

Sting broke out in 1978 with his band The Police with such hits as "Roxanne" and later "Every Breath You Take" before starting his solo career. He has been performing for four decades and has won 16 Grammy Awards.

Many young musicians admire his work and came to sing his tunes in his honor.

Lady Gaga sang "If I Ever Lose My Faith in You," Esperanza Spalding sang "Fragile" and Bruno Mars sang a medley of "So Lonely," "Roxanne" and "Message in a Bottle."

Bruce Springsteen also sang a tribute to his friend and made a toast at a State Department dinner Saturday, saying the breadth and depth of Sting's talents are intimidating as he crosses from folk music to jazz, classical, pop, rock and reggae.

"Sting makes me feel like a musical Neanderthal. When we get together, we always have the same argument. He insists that there are more than three chords, while I insist that there are not," Springsteen said, drawing laughs. "In an age of musical homogenization, no one has ever sounded or sang like my friend."

On Tuesday, Sting will shift to Broadway, joining the cast of "The Last Ship" in his musical about his hometown.

Sting, 63, told The Associated Press he was bewildered by the honor.

"You know, for an Englishman to receive this reward, it's not unique, but it's rare, and I take that pretty seriously," he said. "To come to this country in 1978 with no prospects at all and then to end up here ... it's quite a journey. So I don't take it for granted."

President Barack Obama saluted the honorees Sunday at the White House before the show. During the East Room reception, Obama invoked John F. Kennedy's appreciation for the role of the arts in the nation, which helped inspire the Kennedy Center's creation as a memorial to the 35th president.

AP

From left, 2014 Kennedy Center Honorees Tom Hanks, Patricia McBride, Sting, Lily Tomlin and Al Green pose for a photo following the State Department Dinner for the Kennedy Center Honors on Saturday, Dec. 6, 2014 at the State Department in Washington.

"It's clear that the group on stage with me tonight understands what President Kennedy understood: that our art is a reflection of us not just as people, but as a nation. It binds us together," Obama said. "Songs and dance and film express our triumphs and our faults, our strengths, our tenderness in ways that sometimes words simply cannot do."

Tomlin, 75, made her career in comedy and acting after moving to New York City as a waitress. Soon she would make her TV debut on "The Garry Moore Show" in 1966 and within a few years joined the cast of "Rowan & Martin's Laugh-In" with her popular characters including Ernestine, the telephone operator.

Tomlin went on to create memorable comedy specials, Broadway shows and movie roles, including "9 to 5" with Jane Fonda and Dolly Parton.

Jane Lynch, Reba McEntire, Fonda and Kate McKinnon celebrated Tomlin and her many characters that make people laugh.

"No one is more loyal," Fonda said. "You get Lily and you have her for life."

Tomlin said she couldn't believe she was receiving the Kennedy Center Honors.

"I've never been privy to the insider's circle," she said, "but here I am."

Leading entertainers, including Usher, Jennifer Hudson and Earth, Wind and Fire sang some of Green's greatest hits, and Whoopi Goldberg lauded Green for his unmistakable sound.

"Al Green can caress a lyric like no one else," Goldberg said.

Green, 68, was born to sharecroppers in Arkansas. He made his name touring the gospel circuits of the South and now is one of the defining voices of Memphis soul. His hits include "Let's Stay Together," "Take Me to the River" and "Here I Am (Come and Take Me)." His songs have been covered by Annie Lennox, Dave Matthews, Bruce Springsteen and even Obama, who has famously sung a few lines from "Let's Stay Together."

Made in Japan Godzilla is back after Hollywood hit

TOKYO (AP)—Godzilla is stomping back. And this time, it's Made in Japan, like the original.

The announcement this week from Japanese film studio Toho comes after the success earlier this year of the Hollywood Godzilla, directed by Gareth Edwards, which grossed more than $500 million worldwide.

Toho said in 2004 it had made its last Godzilla film, the 28th in the series centered on the irradiated monster, which first stomped into the world in 1954.

Over the years, Godzilla movies fell out of favor even among Japanese fans.

But the latest Hollywood Godzilla, complete with spikes down its back and a terrifying roar, received relatively favorable reviews in Japan, unlike the 1998 Hollywood Godzilla, directed by Roland Emmerich, which purist fans hated.

Toho said recent innovations in computer-graphics technology were behind its decision to revive Godzilla.

Rolling Stone clarifies its apology on UVA story

WASHINGTON (AP)—Rolling Stone has clarified its apology over a story that had reported a female student was gang-raped at a University of Virginia fraternity, telling readers the mistakes were the magazine's fault, not the alleged victim's.

That's a shift from the original note to readers, issued Friday, when it said of Jackie, the woman who claimed to have been gang-raped at a Phi Kappa Psi fraternity, "Our trust in her was misplaced." The updated note removes that line, which struck some critics as blaming the victim.

The magazine said that it shouldn't have agreed to Jackie's request not to contact the alleged assailants to get their side of the story, out of sensitivity to her. "These mistakes are on Rolling Stone, not on Jackie," wrote the magazine's managing editor, Will Dana. "We apologize to anyone who was affected by the story and we will continue to investigate the events of that evening." The decision not to contact the alleged rapists prompted criticism from other news organizations.

Last month's sensational story used Jackie's case as an example of what it called a culture of sexual violence hiding in plain sight at U.Va., one of the nation's leading public universities. The story claimed that too many people on the Charlottesville, Virginia, campus put protecting the school's image and their own reputations above seeking justice for sex crimes.

The allegations rocked the campus and elevated the issue of sexual assault, leading to protests, a suspension of fraternity activities and an emergency Board of Visitors meeting.

Dana's updated message added some details calling into question the magazine's original story. He noted that Phi Kappa Psi has denied the assault, and said it didn't host an event on the night Jackie alleged she was raped. And Dana said that Jackie is now unsure that the man who allegedly lured her into a room to be gang-raped by seven men, identified as "Drew," was a member of Phi Kappa Psi.

"According to the Washington Post, `Drew' actually belongs to a different fraternity and when contacted by the paper, he denied knowing Jackie," Dana wrote in the new note. "Jackie told Rolling Stone that after she was assaulted, she ran into `Drew' at a UVA pool where they both worked as lifeguards. In its statement, the Phi Psi says none of its members worked at the pool in the fall of 2012." Dana also cited the Post's account of several of Jackie's friends doubting her "narrative," although Jackie told the Post she stood by the account she gave to Rolling Stone.

Prince William, Princess Kate begin 3-day visit in US

NEW YORK (AP)—Britain's Prince William and Princess Kate arrived in New York City on Sunday, the royal couple's first official visit to the U.S. and their first experience with the Big Apple.

The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge's black Cadillac Escalade pulled up in front of the Carlyle Hotel in Manhattan to a throng of media and shrieking admirers, who were kept behind police barricades across Madison Avenue.

Both smiled at the well-wishers with Kate, who is expecting their second child in April, showing off a small bump underneath her maroon coat.

"It's good to be here," William told the hotel's managing director Giovanni Beretta, who was standing outside the entrance to greet the royal couple, who had just spent seven hours on a flight from London.

The Carlyle Hotel was a favorite of William's mother, the late Princess Diana, during her frequent visits to Manhattan in the 1990s. Other celebrity guests over the years have included Michael Jackson, Steve Jobs, John F. Kennedy and Marilyn Monroe.

Wendy Hahn and her husband, Paul Hahn, began waiting at 1 p.m. for the royal couple's arrival outside the hotel. By the time the Duke and Duchess arrived, just before 6 p.m., with temperatures dipping into the 30s, the Hahn's were ordered by police to stand across the street behind metal barricades.

When William and Kate stepped out of their car in front of the Carlyle entrance, "I didn't see anything," said Wendy Hahn. "It was really disappointing; I saw nothing thanks to the NYPD. And we're kind of numb from the cold."

She had seen another royal couple—Charles and Diana—when they arrived at Andrews Air Force base in the mid-80s and she was in the military.

AP

Kate, left, Duchess of Cambridge and Britain's Prince William arrive at The Carlyle Hotel, Sunday, Dec. 7, 2014, in New York.

"I followed Charles and Diana, so I wanted to see William and Kate," said the Connecticut resident, shivering in the cold. "I think they're great; they're more real than other generations of royals."

Paul Hahn said he wouldn't have come, "but I drove in because of my wife."

Earlier Sunday, after arriving at John F. Kennedy International Airport on a British Airways flight, the royals were greeted by Peter Westmacott, British ambassador to the U.S., and his wife; British Consul General Danny Lopez; and Peter Selfridge, U.S. chief of protocol.

William and Kate have a full schedule of events in New York, including a visit to the National Sept. 11 Memorial and Museum and a basketball game between the Brooklyn Nets and the Cleveland Cavaliers.

William is also scheduled to meet with President Barack Obama at the White House on Monday while visiting Washington to attend a World Bank conference. At that meeting, he is expected to speak about combating illegal trade in wildlife parks. Kate was scheduled to tour a New York child development center with the city's first lady, Chirlane McCray.

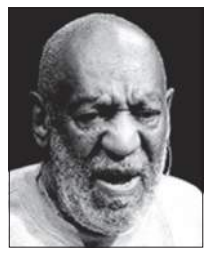
Their visit will also include some events with other high-profile guests. Former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and daughter Chelsea Clinton are accompanying William and Kate to a New York reception highlighting conservation efforts.

At a black-tie scholarship fundraiser for the University of St. Andrews, other guests expected include Tom Hanks and opera singer Renee Fleming. The ticket price went up to $10,000 per seat. The royal couple met at St. Andrews; both earned degrees from the Scottish school.

Passage of time makes proving Cosby claims tough

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Any case against Bill Cosby—who in recent weeks has seen a flurry of decades-old sexual assault allegations, a lawsuit and a police investigation into a molestation claim—would rely on conflicting testimony, and possibly jurors' emotions, legal experts say.

In a civil trial, Cosby might have to face testimony from any of the more than 15 women who have accused him of various forms of sexual misconduct dating back at least 40 years, said Cynthia Bowman, a Cornell Law School professor who has specialized in how the law treats women. While any case dating back decades would hinge on memories that have faded with time, Bowman said she's listened to some of Cosby's accusers speak out—and they could be credible witnesses.



Cosby

"A lot of these cases hinge on he-said, she-said, anyway," Bowman said.

"It strikes me that memory for a traumatic event like this seems to be pretty stark," Bowman said. Most of these allegations involved "relatively young and impressionable girls," she said. "There's an element of shock and betrayal of trust."

Since the allegations of sexual assault by the comedian and actor bubbled to the surface again in early November, only one woman, Judy Huth, has sued, claiming Cosby molested her 40 years ago when she was 15. Huth also gave a statement to Los Angeles police, who opened an investigation Friday. Los Angeles Police Chief Charlie Beck also said his department would investigate any allegations against Cosby, regardless of whether a prosecution would be barred by the statute of limitations.

Cosby, 77, has never been charged with a crime and settled the only other sexual assault case filed against him. In that case filed by former Temple University worker Andrea Constand in 2005, numerous women were prepared to testify against Cosby with their own stories of alleged abuse. The most recent round of accusations range from claims of being groped to being drugged and raped.

Cosby is the latest entertainment figure to contend with high-profile litigation accusing him of sexual abuse. Oscar-nominated actor John Travolta and "X-Men" franchise director Bryan Singer have been sued by men accusing them of sexual misconduct, although the cases were dismissed before ever reaching trial. The wife of "7th Heaven" actor Stephen Collins has accused him in divorce proceedings of abusing underage girls, although the actor has never been charged.

Some of the cases were dismissed after attorney Marty Singer—who also represents Cosby—demonstrated the accusers made inconsistent or inaccurate statements in their complaints. Singer has released statements on a handful of the accusations against Cosby denying the claims; in a legal filing in response to Huth's lawsuit, he accused Huth of attempting to extort $250,000 from Cosby in return for her silence and unsuccessfully trying to sell her story about the allegations to a tabloid a decade ago.

Huth's sexual battery lawsuit accuses Cosby of forcing her to perform a sex act on him in a bedroom of the Playboy Mansion around 1974. It remains uncertain whether her case will survive, and attorney Gloria Allred, who represents Huth, declined to answer questions about it on Friday.

Huth or any accuser whose case reached the trial stage could be seen favorably by a jury, said Jerry Reisman, a civil litigation attorney in Garden City, New York, who has handled sex abuse cases.

"A juror is going to be sympathetic to any victim here," Reisman said.

'Boyhood' sweeps LA Film Critics Awards

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"Boyhood" is on a roll. The Los Angeles Film Critics Association named Richard Linklater's 12-year experiment their best picture of 2014 on Sunday.

Linklater also earned a best director honor for his film, while Patricia Arquette picked up best actress—an interesting choice, since IFC will be pushing her performance in the supporting actress category for all major awards.

Julianne Moore, meanwhile, who is largely considered an Oscar front runner for her portrayal of an Alzheimer's patient in "Still Alice," was awarded runner-up in the category.

In the past week, "Boyhood" has become the consensus choice for critics groups. The Boston Society of Film Critics, the New York Film Critics Circle, and the New York Film Critics online have all picked chosen the film as the year's best. The only outlier is the National Board of Review, which gave that prize to "A Most Violent Year."

The LA Film Critics Awards often overlap with eventual Oscar nominees, and sometimes winners, but are also known for some quirky choices as well. Just take best actor recipient Tom Hardy, whose nearly solo performance in the little-seen thriller "Locke" earned him critical raves, but is notably absent from any serious awards conversation.

Conversely, J.K. Simmons, who is very much in the Oscar conversation, was awarded with best supporting actor for his portrayal of a sadistic jazz instructor in the indie "Whiplash."

Beyond "Boyhood's" four wins, including film editing, only two other films were multi-honorees: The Polish drama "Ida" which won best foreign language film and best supporting actress for Agata Kulesza, and Wes Anderson's "The Grand Budapest Hotel" for screenplay and production design.

Also noteworthy, outside of the cinematography award for Emmanuel Lubezki, "Birdman," a favorite among critics awards, was only given runner-up recognition in a variety of categories, including best actor for Michael Keaton, best supporting actor for Edward Norton.

The Edward Snowden film "Citizenfour" picked up best documentary, with Steve James's ode to Roger Ebert "Life Itself" taking the runner-up position. Both films are on the shortlist for Oscar consideration.

Studio Ghibli's fantasy "The Tale of Princess Kaguya," won for best animation. "The Lego Movie" was the runner-up.

Awards mainstays such as "Wild," "The Theory of Everything," and "The Imitation Game" were completely shut out. The Martin Luther King, Jr. pic "Selma," narrowly missed this distinction since director Ava DuVernay was given the New Generation award.

Gena Rowlands was previously announced as the career achievement award recipient.

"Originality was honored in this year's awards from LAFCA," said LAFCA president Stephen Farber in a statement. "Our group again honored a range of films from around the world and an impressive array of emerging and veteran talents."

Awards will be handed out at the 40th annual Los Angeles Film Critics Association ceremony on Jan. 10 in Los Angeles.

‘Hunger Games’ tops slow weekend at the box office

1. **“The Hunger Games: Mockingjay—Part 1,”** $21.6 million ($31.6 million international).
2. **“Penguins of Madagascar,”** $11.1 million ($23.5 million international).
3. **“Horrible Bosses 2,”** $8.6 million ($7.1 million international).
4. **“Big Hero 6,”** $8.13 million ($4 million international).
5. **“Interstellar,”** $8 million ($22.8 million international).
6. **“Dumb and Dumber To,”** $4.17 million ($3.7 million international).
7. **“The Theory of Everything,”** $2.67 million ($282,000 international).
8. **“Gone Girl,”** $1.5 million.
9. **“The Pyramid,”** $1.35 million ($3.8 million international).
10. **“Birdman,”** $1.15 million.

LOS ANGELES (AP)—”The Hunger Games: Mockingjay—Part 1” continues to dominate the domestic box office, but awards season hopefuls “Wild” and “The Imitation Game” proved their might with impressive limited release showings on this sleepy post-Thanksgiving weekend.

In its third weekend in release, “Mockingjay—Part 1” earned an estimated $21.6 million. Lionsgate’s penultimate chapter in the massively successful franchise has now earned $257.7 million domestically, according to studio estimates Sunday.

And yet, even though “Mockingjay—Part 1” is on track to become the second-highest grossing movie of the year by midweek, it’s still about $78 million shy of where the previous installment, “Catching Fire,” was in its third weekend just last year.

For Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for box office tracker Rentrak, this deficit is only concerning for the overall box office, which is down 4.6 percent for the year. “We are nearing the finish line for 2014 and that is a lot of ground to make up, but luckily we have some big movies on the way,” he says of “Into the Woods,” “Exodus: Gods and Kings,” “Annie,” “Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb” and “Unbroken.”

While audiences wait for that fresh fare, some still turned out to catch up with the leftovers. DreamWorks Animation’s “Penguins of Madagascar” took second place with $11.1 million in its second weekend, while the raunchy Warner Bros. comedy “Horrible Bosses 2” claimed third place with $8.6 million. The fourth and fifth place spots went to Disney’s animated “Big Hero 6” and Paramount’s space odyssey “Interstellar,” which earned $8.13 million and $8.0 million respectively.

“The Pyramid,” Fox’s R-rated horror pic, just barely cracked the top 10 in its debut weekend with a less-than-stellar $1.35 million from 589 locations.

“It’s one of those status quo, boring weekends. But it’s not boring in the specialized or indie world,” Dergarabedian said. “For me that’s where the excitement is.”

“Wild,” a Fox Searchlight release starring Reese Witherspoon, opened in 21 theaters Wednesday, earning an estimated $630,000 over three days for a strong $30,000 per-theater average. The Oscar-winning actress has been getting lots of buzz for her soul-searching turn in the adaptation of Cheryl Strayed’s best seller.

The biggest success story of the weekend is The Weinstein Company’s Alan Turing biopic “The Imitation Game,” which took in an estimated $402,000 from eight locations for a stunning $50,250 per-theater average. Star Benedict Cumberbatch is also expected to be a major contender on the awards circuit this season.

As Dergarabedian puts it: “People wanted to see what the fuss was about and went out in pretty big numbers.”

AP

This image released by 20th Century Fox shows director Ridley Scott, left, and actress Sigourney Weaver on the set of “Exodus: Gods and Kings.” “Exodus,” opening Dec. 12, 2014, stars Bale as Moses, Edgerton as pharaoh-to-be Ramses, John Turturro as the Egyptian leader and Weaver as his queen.

Scott, Bale defend choice on ‘Exodus’ casting

NEW YORK (AP)—The biblical film “Exodus: Gods and Kings” has come under criticism for casting white actors in the film’s main roles as Egyptians.

But director Ridley Scott has a message for those trying to boycott the film: “I say get a life.”

Scott says he’s had to assemble the best possible cast for a film “on a budget of this scale.”

That means investors like big-name actors, not local international stars.

“Exodus: Gods and Kings” cost an estimated $140 million.

British actor Christian Bale, who stars as Moses, understands the frustration, but sees the business side of getting films made.

He feels audiences can play a part in helping more international actors get cast in major films.

If people start supporting the films, “financiers in the market will follow.”

Hugh Hefner: Cosby allegations ‘truly saddening’

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Hugh Hefner says he “would never tolerate” the kind of abusive behavior Bill Cosby is being accused of.

The Playboy magazine mogul said in a statement Saturday that he considers Cosby a good friend and “the mere thought of these allegations is truly saddening.”

Cosby has faced a flurry of allegations in recent weeks that he sexually assaulted more than a dozen women. One of the accusers, Judy Huth, filed a lawsuit last week claiming the comedian forced her into a sex act at the Playboy mansion when she was 15 years old.

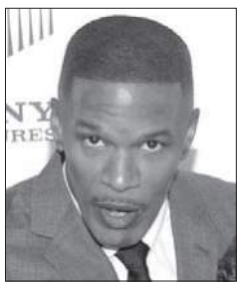
Hefner, who lives at the mansion, said: “I would never tolerate this kind of behavior, regardless of who was involved.”

Foxx: Tough dialogue needed on killings by police

NEW YORK (AP)—Jamie Foxx is calling for a tough dialogue in the wake of killings by police and recent protests over them.

The actor says, “We’ll probably have to have a few uncomfortable conversations to sort of get things right, so everybody can walk and enjoy America like it’s supposed to be enjoyed.”

Foxx spoke in the wake of protests following grand jury decisions in Missouri and New York not to indict white police officers in the deaths of two unarmed black men.



Foxx

Foxx made the remarks Sunday at the New York premiere of “Annie.”

Foxx stars with 11-year-old Quvenzhane (kweh-VEHN’-zhah-nay) Wallis and Cameron Diaz in the musical comedy, whose producers include Will and Jada Pinkett Smith and Shawn “Jay Z” Carter. The movie opens in theaters Dec. 19.

Rita Wilson will star in Larry David’s play

NEW YORK (AP)—Rita Wilson is on the hook for comedian Larry David’s Broadway writing and acting stage debut “Fish in the Dark.”

Producers said Sunday that Wilson will follow her husband Tom Hanks on Broadway in the “Curb Your Enthusiasm” star’s play about a death in the family. Previews will begin Feb. 2 at the Cort Theatre.

Wilson made her Broadway debut as Roxie Hart in “Chicago” in 2006 and has been in “Dinner With Friends” in Los Angeles and Boston, and “Love, Loss and What I Wore” in New York and Los Angeles. Hanks starred in “Lucky Guy” last year.

“Fish in the Dark” will also star Rosie Perez, Jayne Houdyshell, Jake Cannavale, Jonny Orsini, Ben Shenkman, Lewis J. Stadlen, Marylouise Burke, Jenn Lyon, Jerry Adler and Molly Ranson.

Teen hesitates to confront mom over prescription drug abuse

DEAR ABBY: What are the signs of prescription drug abuse? How would you suggest a young person like me (I am 13) confront a close family member about something like this, especially since I’m not sure?

I found an antidepressant prescribed for my mother. As long as I can remember, she has been a happy and upbeat person, and I have no reason to suspect she’s depressed. I’m worried she may be abusing the medication.

I have never felt comfortable asking questions, so it would not be easy for me to ask her. Please help. I now have trouble even speaking to her. Any advice would be appreciated.

WORRIED TEEN IN BOSTON

DEAR WORRIED TEEN: Perhaps it will lessen your fears to know that antidepressants are sometimes prescribed not only for depression, but also to help people with sleep problems and other conditions. You have reached an age when it is important for teens to be able to talk to their parents about any concerns they may have, and you should talk to your mom about this. Please don’t procrastinate.

DEAR ABBY: You once wrote that you were allowed to read anything growing up—nothing was taboo. We can all use good advice and be prepared when we encounter difficult situations.

I took that to heart and decided my children should read your column with me instead of my lecturing/instructing them about life. So now they take turns reading the questions aloud. We have a group discussion, and we all give our answers to the questions before we read your answers. If all of our answers are different, we have a new discussion.

I love it because of the topics that come up. My children are learning how to reason, and that people from all walks of life (and all ages) have problems and need help. And finally, I love that my children realize that it’s OK to ask for help, and they shouldn’t worry or feel ashamed to ask in any situation.

Thank you so much, Abby. Your column is a great parenting tool for me and my husband.

MRS. M. IN SAN DIEGO

DEAR MRS. M.: Thank you for your kind words. My column may be a useful teaching tool, but you and your husband are using it wisely. While not everyone may agree with everything that’s printed in my column, the discussions it often generates are helpful for sharing ideas and clarifying family values. This kind of communication brings families closer together.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My fiance and I recently got engaged, and I was thrilled when he got down on one knee with my great-grandmother’s ring. While I love both the ring and the idea that we saved a lot of money we can now put toward our wedding, I can tell he feels awkward when well-wishers congratulate him on having selected such a pretty and expensive ring. What’s the best way to respond to these comments and make my fiance feel like he did a great job?

VINTAGE-LOVING BRIDE

DEAR VLB: It isn’t necessary to discuss the history of the ring with everyone who comments. Because you know your fiance is sensitive about it, just smile and say thank you.

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

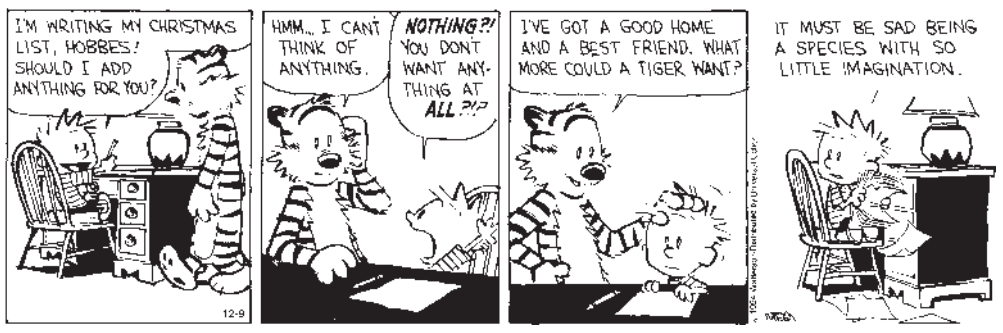
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order “How to Have a Lovely Wedding.” Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

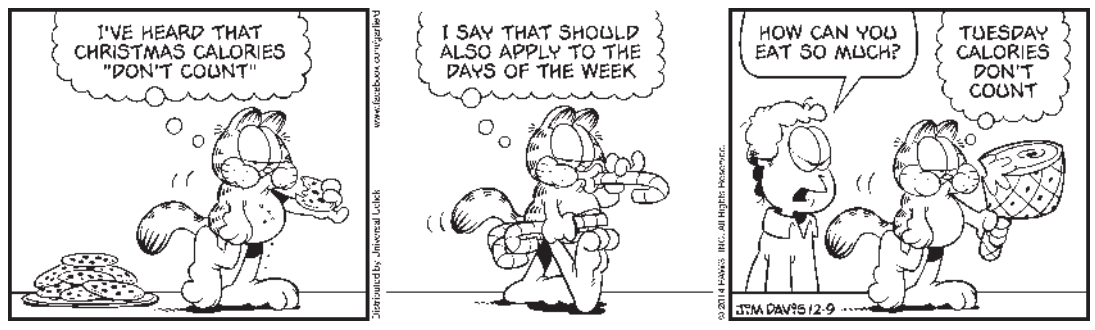
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


I'M WRITING MY CHRISTMAS LIST, HOBBES! SHOULD I ADD ANYTHING FOR YOU?
HMM... I CAN'T THINK OF ANYTHING.
NOTHING?! YOU DON'T WANT ANYTHING AT ALL?!?
I'VE GOT A GOOD HOME AND A BEST FRIEND. WHAT MORE COULD A TIGER WANT?
IT MUST BE SAD BEING A SPECIES WITH SO LITTLE IMAGINATION.
12-9

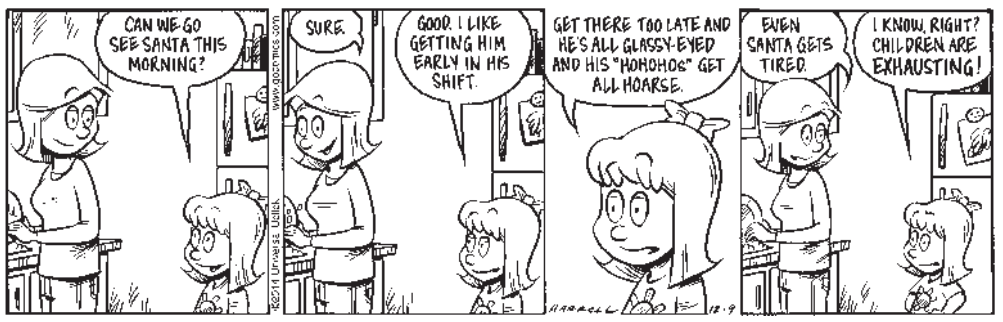
Garfield®

By Jim Davis


I'VE HEARD THAT CHRISTMAS CALORIES "DON'T COUNT"
I SAY THAT SHOULD ALSO APPLY TO THE DAYS OF THE WEEK
HOW CAN YOU EAT SO MUCH?
TUESDAY CALORIES DON'T COUNT
JIM DAVIS 12-9

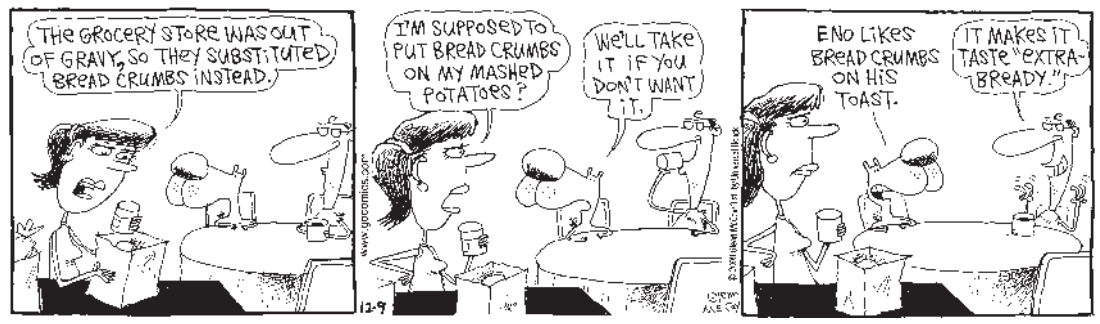
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


CAN WE GO SEE SANTA THIS MORNING?
SURE.
GOOD. I LIKE GETTING HIM EARLY IN HIS SHIFT.
GET THERE TOO LATE AND HE'S ALL GLASSY-EYED AND HIS "HOHOHOS" GET ALL HOARSE.
EVEN SANTA GETS TIRED.
I KNOW, RIGHT? CHILDREN ARE EXHAUSTING!

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


THE GROCERY STORE WAS OUT OF GRAVY, SO THEY SUBSTITUTED BREAD CRUMBS INSTEAD.
I'M SUPPOSED TO PUT BREAD CRUMBS ON MY MASHED POTATOES?
WE'LL TAKE IT IF YOU DON'T WANT IT.
ENO LIKES BREAD CRUMBS ON HIS TOAST.
IT MAKES IT TASTE "EXTRA-BREADY."

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Church service
5 Meadow
8 Festive
12 Foot part
13 Under the weather
14 Hearty brews
15 Mad king of literature
16 Fight
18 Mourns
20 Not just chubby
21 Existed
22 Latin 101 word
23 Not to be trusted
26 Chic
30 "— the fields we go"
31 Expert
32 Carnival city
33 Like the Muppet chef
36 Location
38 Remark from Cathy, in the comics
39 Prompt
40 Debate topic
43 Fore-and-aft piece
47 "The Courtship of Miles —"
49 Hodge-podge
50 Departed
51 "Jungle Book" python
52 Dickens girl
53 Lambs' mamas
54 Sea eagle
55 Vend

DOWN
1 Shopping center
2 Vicinity
3 Con game
4 Cagey
5 Rosters
6 B.P.O.E. members
7 — Baba
8 Frolic
9 "It's a Sin to Tell —"
10 Not so much
11 Arthur of tennis
17 "— and Michele's High School Reunion"
19 Aye canceler
22 Dined
23 "Help!"
24 Chop
25 Metric measure
26 Univ., e.g.
27 401(k) alternative
28 Oft-bracketed word
29 Weeding tool
31 Request
34 Intimidates
35 On the rocks
36 Young pooch
37 Bad cars
39 "Yankee Doodle Dandy" subject
40 Capri, for one
41 Crock-Pot creation
42 Secure
43 Despot
44 Sheltered
45 Ledge
46 Turnpike fee
48 Mamie's man

Solution time: 22 mins.

M	I	C	E	■	D	A	S	■	A	S	P	S
A	R	A	M	■	■	V	Y	■	U	T	A	H
G	A	R	B	■	S	E	N	O	R	I	T	A
I	N	D	O	O	R	■	C	O	O	L	E	D
■	■	■	S	T	O	A	■	O	N	E	■	■
S	E	N	S	I	B	L	E	■	A	T	O	M
E	M	U	■	S	E	I	N	E	■	T	E	A
A	S	I	F	■	S	E	N	A	■	O	R	S
■	■	■	S	A	C	■	N	O	S	E	■	■
A	P	A	C	H	E	■	B	Y	E	B	Y	E
S	E	N	T	I	N	E	■	■	O	P	A	L
A	R	C	O	■	■	R	E	■	F	A	L	L
P	I	E	R	■	D	A	D	■	F	E	E	S

Yesterday's answer 12-9

1	2	3	4	■	5	6	7	■	8	9	10	11
12				■	13			■	14			
15				■	16			17				
18				19			■	20				
■	■	■	21			■	22			■	■	■
23	24	25			■	26				27	28	29
30			■	■	31			■	■	32		
33			34	35			■	36	37			
■	■	■	38			■	39			■	■	■
40	41	42			■	43				44	45	46
47					48			■	49			
50				■	51				52			
53				■	54			■	55			

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Simon Helberg, 34; Felicity Huffman, 52; Donny Osmond, 57; Dame Judi Dench, 80.

Happy Birthday: Stabilize your financial, medical and emotional future. Don't take chances when you should be protecting yourself and putting everything in perspective. Much can be accomplished if you are strict and disciplined, keeping uncertainty from making you appear vulnerable. Showing a little bravado and confidence will go a long way when it comes to getting what you want. Your numbers are 3, 15, 19, 22, 28, 33, 41.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Stay on top of your domestic situation or any home improvements you are making. Problems with fire, electronics or a tiff with someone you love can quickly lead to trouble. Expand your knowledge to prepare you for future trends. ✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Think matters through carefully. Moderation will be critical when dealing with investments. Don't allow an emotional situation to cost you. Getting bent out of shape will not solve problems; it will only make matters worse. Stabilize important relationships. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): You'll be easily distracted. Don't let anything hinder your ability to get a job finished. Partnerships will improve if you are a team player. Explore and expand your options. Thrive on change and show your diversity. Romance is on the rise. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Use your unique and expressive insight to keep anyone trying to interfere in your plans at arm's length. Protect what's yours by relying on your experience and past connections to ensure you are in control and on track. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Roll out the red carpet and get ready to show off what you have to offer. You'll attract both personal and professional interest if you share your thoughts. Romantic opportunities are present, but you may have to make the first move. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): You'll face opposition at home and must be careful not to confuse facts with fiction when dealing with personal matters. Precision and detail will be necessary when expressing your views. Keep your wits about you and avoid discord. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Don't let your emotions interfere with what needs to be done. Speak up and take action. Someone you worked with in the past will help you out. Make the first move and you will take any opposition you face by surprise. ✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Work-related matters should be put into play. Use your skill, intuition and memory to help make things happen. Keep in mind that quality must be put before quantity if you want to stay ahead of the game financially. ✪✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Embrace change. You'll surprise everyone with your ability to handle whatever comes your way. Draw on your experience and nothing will stand in your way. Positive changes at home will add to your comfort and happiness. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST
THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY
COPYRIGHT 2007 UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Choose your partners carefully. Make sure that both parties in a relationship have something to contribute. Equality will determine the longevity of any connection in which you intend to participate. Be smart and considerate of others. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Make unique changes. A new job or finding a way to make some extra cash is apparent. Branch out by using your talents in diverse ways. Applying what you know or do best to fit the current economic trends will pay off. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Don't get caught in the crossfire. Take a course or discuss your concerns to help you get a better view of what you are dealing with. Invest in yourself and the things you want to pursue in the future. ✪✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are driven, innovative and adaptable. You are quick and impatient.

*Eugenia's website—**eugenialast.com**, Eugenia's android app @ **http://bit.ly/exhoro** and join Eugenia on **twitter/facebook/linkedin**.*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

					3		5	
	5	9		8				6
	3		7		9			
		5				9		1
	2						3	
1		3				8		
			8		6		7	
9				4		5	1	
	8		2					

Difficulty Level ★★ 12/09

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

7	2	6	1	8	4	3	5	9
9	4	1	3	2	5	6	7	8
5	8	3	9	6	7	2	1	4
8	9	4	5	1	2	7	6	3
3	1	2	7	4	6	9	8	5
6	5	7	8	9	3	1	4	2
1	3	9	4	7	8	5	2	6
2	7	8	6	5	9	4	3	1
4	6	5	2	3	1	8	9	7

Difficulty Level ★ 12/09

©2012 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

CLEAN UP YOUR ROOM! Solution: 9 letters

S	C	R	E	S	S	E	R	D	E	L	E	B	A	L
E	L	P	C	O	A	N	T	T	E	G	N	O	P	S
H	E	A	A	A	A	N	A	A	N	Y	T	U	D	T
T	A	T	M	P	R	R	I	A	R	I	D	W	E	A
O	N	E	T	I	E	P	R	T	D	O	N	A	T	E
L	O	S	M	A	N	R	E	Y	I	C	C	T	L	N
C	U	O	M	P	A	A	W	T	G	Z	T	E	U	I
D	T	L	O	W	T	I	D	O	Ⓢ	N	E	R	D	H
R	S	C	O	U	R	Y	N	E	R	Ⓖ	I	T	O	S
E	S	R	R	A	E	L	C	O	F	K	Ⓐ	R	C	S
T	H	H	B	E	P	I	L	F	M	F	F	Ⓡ	P	T
T	E	S	A	E	T	R	A	S	H	M	U	A	E	S
U	E	A	E	N	S	T	R	I	P	B	A	T	S	R
L	T	W	A	X	G	N	I	T	S	U	D	E	S	T
C	S	I	R	B	E	D	G	L	E	A	M	I	N	G

© 2014 Universal Uclick www.wonderword.com Join us on Facebook 12/9

Aerate, Ammonia, Arrange, Broom, Carpets, Clean O ut, Clear, Closet, Clothes, Clutter, Debris, Decorate, Donate, Dresser, Dusting, Dustpan, Duty, Empty, Fast, Flip, Gleaming, Hang, Label, Litter, Mess, Neat, Paperwork, Rags, Sanitize, Scour, Scrub, Sheets, Shine, Soap, Sort, Sponge, Spring, Strip, Stuffed Animals, Sweep, Throw, Tidy, Trash, Wash, Water, Wax

Yesterday's Answer: Hollandaise

Purchase **WONDERWORD MILLENNIUM SERIES #2** in time for the holidays! Order online at www.WonderWordBooks.com or call 1-800-642-6480. (Contains 100 puzzles.)

CLASSIFIED ADS

EMPLOYMENT

2-Maintenance & Repair Worker, 4-House worker & 3-Bookkeeper. $6.05/hour. Interested applicants, mail resume to MTO Maintenance at P.O. Box 504053, Saipan MP 96950

---

(1) Farmer. With 3 years experience. If interested, please send resume to HillTop Farm at Mailex 456 P.O. Box 10005 Saipan, MP 96950, 888-6572.

---

1 General Manager (Korean / Japanese cuisine restaurants): $6.05 - $8.50/hr. At least 5 years of cumulative experience as a general manager of restaurants specializing in Korean and Japanese cuisine required. Email resume to chinayanbian@hanmisaipan.com.

---

1 General Manager / Chef (Korean cuisine): $6.05 - $8.50/hr. At least 3 years of experience as a general manager and cook at a restaurant specializing in Korean cuisine required. Email resume to woori@hanmisaipan.com.

---

1 General Manager / Floral Designer: $6.05 - $8.50/hr. At least 3 years of experience as a general manager and professional artificial floral designer at an artificial flower shop required. Email resume to okbang@hanmisaipan.com.

APARTMENT FOR RENT

1 Bedroom, 1 Bath, 1 Kitchen, Double Closet & AC. Fully Concrete with Security Bars and Deadbolt. Safe quiet area. Ahgaga Rd. Papago. $350/month including water. Call: 256-1219 or 783-5448.

LOOKING TO LEASE

Looking for House, Apt, and Motel near Garapan area for long term lease. Call Zheng at 287-7676

APARTMENTS FOR RENT

Realty Management Services

Fina Sisu Terraces
Small 1-BR, 1-BTH. Unit approximately 284 sq.ft. **$250**/month.
2-BR, 1-BTH. **$350-$550**/month. Close to NMC campus. MIHA applicants accepted.

Ocean View Terraces
(Navy Hill)) Unit Approximately 642 sq/ft Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apt with private balcony & beautiful view.
$600/month

Sunset View Terraces
(Navy Hill) Unit Approximately 642 sq/ft Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apt with private balcony & beautiful view.
$550/month

Hilltop Condominium*
(San Vicente) Unit approximately 1,024sq/ft Luxury 2BR & 2BTH Apt with private balcony & majestic view. **$700**/month
Luxury 1BR & 1BTH approximately 600 sq/ft **$500**/month
***Wi-Fi & nighttime security exduded**

FEATURES:
- Fully Furnished
- Back-up Generator
- Air-conditioning in all rooms
- FREE WiFi
- Laundry Area
- Nighttime Security
- Ample Parking
- 24hr water

Please visit our website at www.saipan-properties.com Call for an appointment 235-6527/8.

CLICK IT OR TICKET
DAY & NIGHT

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

1 – HEAVY EQUIPMENT MECHANIC

Applicant must perform a full range of maintenance, repair and service activities on heavy equipment including but not limited to heavy duty trucks, excavators, graders, cranes, backhoes/loaders, tractors, bulldozers and other heavy equipment. Must have strong knowledge in overhauling and troubleshooting of heavy diesel engines and transmissions including repair and overhauling of hydraulic systems, brakes and suspension system. Must have the ability to understand parts books and repair manuals as well as request and order parts. High School Diploma with (5) years minimum experience.

Interested qualified applicants can submit their resume and latest police clearance via e-mail to saipan@aicconstruction.com or mail to AIC Marianas, Inc., PMB 564 PPP Box 10000, Saipan, MP 96950. Closing date: December 11, 2014.

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

2 – HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATORS

High school diploma with (5) years minimum work related experience. Able to operate various heavy equipment including but not limited to Backhoe/Loader, Compactor, Tractor/Trailer Combo, Bulldozer, Hydraulic Crane and Grader. Crane operator must be able to pass required crane certification exam. Must understand load weights and check them against lifting capacities to prevent overload and have full knowledge of how to operate cranes, or other moving equipment for lifting, moving, or placing loads. Learn and follow safety regulations. Take actions to avoid potential hazards or obstructions, such as utility lines, other equipment, other workers, or falling objects. Clean, lubricate and inspect mechanisms or accessories such as cables, pulleys, or grappling devices to prevent malfunctions or damage. Perform routine maintenance of equipment. Must have knowledge in troubleshooting and able to diagnose problem or malfunction and make repairs as necessary.

Interested qualified applicants can submit their resume and latest police clearance via e-mail to saipan@aicconstruction.com or mail to AIC Marianas, Inc., PMB 564 PPP Box 10000, Saipan, MP 96950. Closing date: December 11, 2014.

Job Vacancy Announcement

(01) Ultrasound/X-Ray Technician (Part-Time)

- At least five years' experience or related field
- Must hold a Bachelor of Science in Radiologic Technology
- Must be over five years' experience in electronic health and practice partner records
- Licensed by the Medical Profession Licensing Board, CNMI
- Flexible with time schedule

Interested applicants must submit resume or pick up applications at Health Professional Corporation dba Saipan Health Clinic at Chalan Kiya, Saipan. Deadline to submit applications will be on 12/12/2014 at 4:00 p.m.

For more information, please call Maggie Torres at (670) 234-2901 ext. 128.

ST. JUDE RENAL CARE FACILITY, INC.

(01) NURSE SUPERVISOR

- Must pass NCLEX – RN
- Current CNMI RN License
- Attended a hemodialysis training program
- At least two years' experience in hemodialysis and one year experience as a charge nurse in dialysis
- English language skills – proficient in spoken, written and comprehension
- Must hold a Bachelor of Science in Nursing
- Certification in Basic Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
- Flexible with time schedule

Interested applicants must submit a resume or pick up an application at St. Jude Renal Care Facility, Inc., at Chalan Kiya, Saipan. Deadline to submit an application will be on 12/26/2014 at 4:00 p.m. For more information, please call our HR Office at (670) 234-2901 ext. 128.

TAGA *Sports* is now on issuu.com/tagasports!

Check out the latest issue and back issues of TAGA *Sports,* the CNMI's first and premier sports magazine, on issuu.com/tagasports!

Now you won't have to miss a copy of TAGA *Sports*. Visit issuu.com/tagasports to get your fix on all sports happenings in the CNMI!

To inquire about ad rates or to place an ad, call (670) 235-2440, 235-6397, 235-8747.

WHATZIT Solution: Drink like a fish

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED LINER ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 5-day run in both print and online editions, for as low as $30 for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of the packages below.

ADS	(PRINT)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	**$15**	**$30**
• 5-Liner	**$24**	**$45**

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

WHATZIT™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

www.facebook.com/dingbatsgames

Find today's solution in classified section

Pelicans top Lakers, end road losing skid

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Anthony Davis scored 23 points, Jrue Holiday had 22 points and eight assists, and the New Orleans Pelicans beat the Los Angeles Lakers 104-87 on Sunday night.

Ryan Anderson had 11 points and 10 rebounds off the bench, helping the Pelicans

end a four-game road losing streak that included a 27-point drubbing by the Warriors on Thursday and a 20-point loss to the Clippers on Saturday night.

Kobe Bryant had 14 points in 31 minutes for the Lakers (5-16). He and Davis entered Sunday 1-2 in the league in scoring average at 25.8 points and 25.3, respectively.

With his team allowing an average of 111.2 points entering Sunday, first-year Lakers coach Byron Scott inserted power forward Ed Davis and point guard Ronnie Price into his starting unit while Carlos Boozer and Jeremy Lin came off the bench.

That ended Boozer's streak of 588 straight games as a starter. The 13-year veteran and two-time All-Star had 12 points and six rebounds over 23 minutes in his first game as a reserve since March 14, 2006, with Utah at Miami.

Lin played 20 minutes, finishing with three points and four assists. The five-year veteran started all 82 games in 2012-13 with Houston, but came off the bench in 44 of his 71 games with the Rockets last season before the Lakers acquired him on July 15.

Holiday's 12 points paced New Orleans to a 50-40 halftime lead. Nick Young, who was so upset following the Lakers' 113-96 loss at Boston on Friday night that he walked away from a TV interview at his locker after just 15 seconds, missed his first six shots against the Pelicans before hitting a 3-pointer that trimmed the Lakers' deficit to 63-57 with 4:28 left in the third.

AP

New Orleans Pelicans' Jrue Holiday, left, and Los Angeles Lakers' Ronnie Price, right, reach for a loose ball during the second half of an NBA basketball game Sunday, Dec. 7, 2014, in Los Angeles. The Pelicans won, 104-87.

Reserve Gal Mekel, playing his second game with the Pelicans, gave them their biggest lead at 83-59 on a fast-break layup 46 seconds into the fourth quarter. The Lakers closed to 83-71 with a 12-0 run ignited by 3-pointers from Young and Wayne Ellington and capped by Young's two free throws with 8:54 to play.

But that was as close as they got, as Anthony Davis helped put it away with two layups, a dunk and a 21-footer that gave New Orleans a 100-81 cushion with 2:54 left.

Grizzlies 103, Heat 87

In Memphis, Jon Leuer scored a season-high 20 points and matched his career best with 12 rebounds, leading the Grizzlies to the win.

Mike Conley added 18 points for Memphis, connecting on all eight of his shots, and Zach Randolph and Courtney Lee finished with 17 points apiece. Memphis went 8 for 13 from 3-point range and shot 59 percent from the field overall.

Dwyane Wade scored 25 points in Miami's fourth straight loss. Josh McRoberts added 14 points.

Hawks 96, Nuggets 84

In Atlanta, Paul Millsap scored 23 points, Kyle Korver had 15 and Atlanta earned its sixth straight win.

The Hawks got off to a fast start, bolting to a 57-36 halftime lead.

Al Horford and DeMarre Carroll each had 11 points and combined for 17 Atlanta rebounds.

Wilson Chandler finished with a season-high 29 points for the Nuggets, and Timofey Mozgov had 14 points. Chandler and Mozgov combined for 21 rebounds.

Denver began the season with a win over Detroit before losing seven of eight. A Nov. 17 victory at Cleveland started a 7-1 stretch, but the Nuggets have dropped their last three.

Celtics 101, Wizards 93

In Boston, Jeff Green scored 25 points for Boston, and reserve Marcus Thornton had 21.

Rajon Rondo had a triple-double with 13 points, 13 rebounds and 11 assists for the Celtics, who won their third straight after a season-high five-game losing streak.

Rasual Butler scored 14 of his 22 points in the final quarter for the Wizards (13-6), who failed to match the franchise's best start since 1968-69.

Paul Pierce, who played for the Celtics for 15 seasons and was a member of their 2008 championship team before being traded to Brooklyn prior to last season, scored 16 points for Washington.

Wizards star John Wall had 17 points, 14 assists and eight rebounds.

Mavericks 125, Bucks 102

In Dallas, Chandler Parsons scored 28 points, helping Dallas roll to the win.

The Mavericks built a big lead with a 12-0 run in the first quarter and didn't trail again in their second victory in five days over the Bucks. Parsons had nine in the opening period.

Dirk Nowitzki, who was rested for the game at Milwaukee on Wednesday and scored a season-low 10 points Friday, bounced back with 21 and Monta Ellis added 19.

All five Bucks starters scored in double figures, led by Giannis Antetokounmpo's 18 points.

Trail Blazers 103, Knicks 99

In New York, LaMarcus Aldridge scored 24 points and Portland regrouped after blowing a 10-point lead in the fourth quarter, recording its fourth straight victory.

Carmelo Anthony had 23 points, but the Knicks lost their eighth straight and 12th in their last 13. J.R. Smith scored 20 points and Amare Stoudemire added 16 for New York, whose 4-18 start is a franchise worst.

The Trail Blazers have won five straight games over New York.

Wesley Matthews had 17 points for the Trail Blazers, who led 89-79 with 8:04 left in the fourth before New York stormed back with a 16-5 run.

Thunder 96, Pistons 84

In Auburn Hills, Kevin Durant scored 28 points, Russell Westbrook added 22 points and 11 rebounds, and Oklahoma City beat lowly Detroit.

The Pistons have lost 12 straight, two short of the franchise record. Detroit's last win came on Nov. 14 in overtime at Oklahoma City, a game that both Durant and Westbrook missed due to injury.

Serge Ibaka added 13 points and 13 rebounds for the Thunder, while Kentavious Caldwell-Pope led Detroit with 19 points.

Red Sox owner to meet with Lester

BOSTON (AP)—Coveted free-agent pitcher Jon Lester is expected to make a final decision on where he'll sign in the upcoming days, with a possible announcement coming at the winter meetings in San Diego.

With that major event set to commence on Monday, interested teams have less than 48 hours to jockey for position without their competitors looking over their shoulder and tracking their every movement.

And jockey they are.

According to a report from Rob Bradford and Alex Speier of WEEI in Boston, Red Sox owner John Henry made a strong push on his club's behalf on Friday evening by flying to Atlanta to meet with Lester personally and potentially cement his feelings on a return to Fenway Park.

The Red Sox are one of four or perhaps five teams believed to be in the thick of the Lester sweepstakes. The Chicago Cubs, San Francisco Giants and Los Angeles Dodgers have also been linked, with the Atlanta Braves thought to be fading and the New York Yankees sort of lingering in the background.

CBS Sports' Jon Heyman writes that Lester already has multiple offers in the range of $130-140 million in hand, and though Lester seems to be leaning toward a Boston return, their offer reportedly falls on the lower end of the scale. Thus, John Henry may have felt it was necessary to meet Lester to make sure his comfort with Boston is firm, and perhaps remind him of the good old days from way back in 2013.

Let's be honest here, any time you're linked to the same free agent as the Dodgers, perhaps the Yankees, and now a Cubs team that's ready to spend and also has front office connections to your target, the work isn't done until the ink on the contract dries.

Los Angeles and New York won't be shy about throwing around more money if the desire to sign Lester truly exists. Though Joel Sherman of the New York Post says one Yankees source claimed Lester's name never comes up in discussions, that could be a smokescreen, and it could be subject to change at any moment. The Cubs have been less secretive about their pursuit. In fact, new front office executive Ryan Dempster is said to be in recruiting mode, attempting to sell his former teammate from Boston's 2013 World Series championship run on the Cubs bright future.

Though in many ways it feels like Lester's return to Boston is a foregone conclusion, it's not something you should feel comfortable putting money on. Things can change quickly, and many times it's the last voice that's heard that has the most influence.

Let the jockeying continue.

Woods tied for last, but in good health

WINDERMERE, Fla. (AP)—Tiger Woods tied for last place in his return to golf after four months and found at least one reason for optimism.

At least he has his health.

Except for flu-like symptoms on Saturday, Woods made it through 72 holes of the Hero World Challenge by swinging as hard as he wanted without feeling any pain. In his eyes, that far outweighed the shocking sight of so many duffed chips.

Woods muffed two more chips on the par-5 13th hole on his way to a triple bogey. He rallied with two late birdies for a 72 and shared last place in the 18-man field at Isleworth with Hunter Mahan at even-par 288.

He finished 26 shots behind Jordan Spieth.

"I hadn't played in four months," Woods said. "To come out here and not play in any kind of pain is great progress, and to be able to hit the ball as hard as I want really without flinching."

Woods had back surgery a week before the Masters to alleviate a pinched nerve. That kept him out of golf for about three months. After missing the cut in the PGA Championship on Aug. 9, he shut it down the last four months to strengthen his muscle structure.

"I made some progress," Woods said. "I hadn't played in four months and I'm in absolutely no pain, which is nice. To be able to go all out on some of these drives like I did this week really enforces what I'm doing is the right thing for my body."

Different about this return to golf—his fifth in the last five years due to injury - is that Woods also is working with his third swing coach in the last five years. Chris Como walked every round, and Woods said he would consult with him during a week of practice before resting for the holidays.

He did not say when he would return. During an engaging spot in the broadcast booth, NBC Sports announcer Dan Hicks asked about his schedule and mentioned Hawaii.

"It won't be the Tournament of Champions," Woods said with a laugh.

Even though he tied for 17th, it was his best finish of the year. Woods tied for 25th at Doral in his final tournament before back surgery.

Wilson leads Seahawks over Eagles, 24-14

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Russell Wilson threw two touchdown passes, ran for another score and the Seattle Seahawks stifled Philadelphia's high-powered offense in a 24-14 victory over the Eagles on Sunday.

Wilson had 263 yards passing and ran for 48 to help the Seahawks (9-4) win their third straight. The defending Super Bowl champions have victories over NFC West-leading Arizona (10-3), San Francisco (7-6) and Philadelphia (9-4) in the last three weeks.

The Eagles host Dallas (9-4) with first place in the NFC East at stake next week.

Richard Sherman and Co. held the Eagles to 139 total yards, the fewest under Chip Kelly.

Pete Carroll was the winner in his first NFL matchup against Kelly. In the coaches' only other meeting, Kelly's Oregon Ducks beat Carroll and USC 47-20 on Oct. 31, 2009.

AP
Seattle Seahawks' Russell Wilson (3) tries to get away from Philadelphia Eagles' Trent Cole (58) during the second half of an NFL football game, Sunday, Dec. 7, 2014, in Philadelphia.

Patriots 23, Chargers 14

In San Diego, Tom Brady threw a 69-yard touchdown pass to Julian Edelman midway through the fourth quarter as the Patriots (10-3) won for the eighth time in nine games. It clinched their 12th straight 10-win season for the second-longest such streak in NFL history.

The Patriots spent the week in San Diego following a loss at Green Bay in order to cut down on late-season travel. It certainly seemed to pay off for the defense: San Diego (8-5) was shut out in the second half.

New England went ahead 16-14 on Stephen Gostkowski's 38-yard field goal with 10:34 left. Brady faked a handoff and hit Edelman on a slant at about the 45 on the touchdown. Edelman broke two tackles and was gone.

Brady completed 28 of 44 passes for 317 yards and two touchdowns.

Broncos 24, Bills 17

In Denver, C.J. Anderson ran for three touchdowns and the Broncos overcame a rare unsteady outing by Peyton Manning.

Manning's streak of 51 straight games with a touchdown throw—three shy of Drew Brees' NFL record—ended on a sun-splashed, almost still afternoon in Denver, where the game-time temperature was a balmy 63 degrees.

Despite three turnovers, the Broncos (10-3) won their third straight game since changing from a pass-oriented attack to a run-heavy approach.

Manning finished 14 of 20 for 173 yards with two interceptions. His top receiver, Demaryius Thomas, was held to two catches for 11 yards, and tight end Julius Thomas (ankle) was active but didn't play for the third straight week.

Buffalo is 7-6.

Cardinals 17, Chiefs 14

In Glendale, Kerwynn Williams rushed for 100 yards two days after being elevated from the Arizona practice squad and the Cardinals rallied.

The NFC West-leading Cardinals (10-3) took the lead when Drew Stanton threw a 26-yard touchdown pass to Jaron Brown in the third quarter.

Jamaal Charles scored two first-half touchdowns on a 63-yard run and 18-yard pass from Alex Smith, but the Chiefs (7-6) were shut out in the second half.

Arizona won a crucial call reversal when it challenged that tight end Travis Kelce fumbled deep in Cardinals territory late in the fourth quarter.

Colts 25, Browns 24

In Cleveland, Andrew Luck threw a 1-yard touchdown pass to T.Y. Hilton with 32 seconds left, rallying Indianapolis.

Cleveland contained the Colts quarterback until the final minute, but couldn't finish him off.

Before Luck connected with Hilton, Colts running back Daniel Herron picked up 2 yards on fourth down to keep the drive alive. Luck, who threw two interceptions and spent the day being harassed by an energized Browns defense, then fired his second TD pass to Hilton.

The Colts (9-4) trailed 21-7 in the third quarter, but stormed back behind Luck, who finished 24 of 53 for 294 yards.

The Browns (7-6) got two defensive touchdowns, but Cleveland's offense, led by struggling quarterback Brian Hoyer, couldn't do enough to keep the team's playoff hopes from fading.

Steelers 42, Bengals 21

In Cincinnati, Ben Roethlisberger threw three touchdown passes, including a 94-yarder to rookie Martavis Bryant in the fourth quarter that was the longest play from scrimmage this season.

The win turned the AFC North into a wide-open race. In a game they had to win, the Steelers (8-5) caught up and ran away with 25 points in the fourth quarter.

For Cincinnati (8-4-1), it was a second straight lopsided at home loss to a division rival. The Bengals fell to Cleveland 24-3 before going on the road and winning three straight to take control of the division.

Now, it's anyone's title.

Le'Veon Bell had another big all-around game, running for 185 yards, catching six passes for 50 yards, and scoring three touchdowns.

Ravens 28, Dolphins 13

In Miami Gardens, The Baltimore Ravens played more than 17 minutes before picking up a first down, then overcame a 10-point deficit to win.

The Ravens rallied with consecutive touchdown drives of 97 and 75 yards, and added the clinching score after a favorable replay reversal.

A gamble by coach John Harbaugh in the third quarter helped. The Ravens made a first down on fourth-and-1 in their territory, jump-starting the TD drive that put them ahead.

The victory gave Baltimore (8-5) a significant edge over Miami (7-6) in the AFC's scramble for a wild-card playoff berth. The Dolphins, who haven't been to the postseason since 2008, are now a long shot with three games to go.

Raiders 24, 49ers 13

In Oakland, Derek Carr threw three touchdown passes and the Raiders put a major dent into San Francisco's dwindling playoff hopes in the Battle of the Bay.

Carr completed 22 of 28 passes for 254 yards and completely outplayed counterpart Colin Kaepernick as the Raiders (2-11) won their second straight home game surrounding last week's 52-0 loss at St. Louis.

With a second straight loss the 49ers (7-6) are in danger of missing the playoffs for the first time in coach Jim Harbaugh's four-year tenure.

San Francisco is two games out of the second wild-card spot with three games remaining after making three straight NFC title games.

Panthers 41, Saints 10

In New Orleans, Cam Newton passed for three touchdowns, appeared to incite a scuffle with frustrated New Orleans after he went over the pile for another score, and the Panthers ended a six-game skid.

Jonathan Stewart added a 69-yard touchdown as the Panthers (4-8-1) pulled closer to NFC South leader Atlanta (5-7), which plays at Green Bay on Monday night.

Newton's jawing and "Superman" celebration of his 2-yard rushing touchdown in the first quarter drew a shove from linebacker Curtis Lofton. That ignited a scrum that eventually went into a tunnel beyond the end zone.

Panthers tight end Brandon Williams was ejected for punching Cam Jordan, but Carolina kept rolling.

Newton's scoring passes went to Kelvin Benjamin, Greg Olsen and Fozzy Whitaker.

New Orleans (5-8) lost its fourth straight home game to drop a half-game behind Atlanta.

Lions 34, Buccaneers 17

In Detroit, Matthew Stafford threw for 311 yards and three touchdowns — including one off a fluky deflection late in the game.

The Lions (9-4) trail first-place Green Bay by a half-game in the NFC North, with the Packers hosting Atlanta on Monday night.

Tampa Bay (2-11) was finally eliminated from playoff contention — the NFC South's mediocrity could only keep the Bucs in it for so long. They turned over the ball three times in the second quarter against Detroit and never led.

Calvin Johnson had eight catches for 158 yards and a touchdown for Detroit, which snapped a nine-game losing streak in December.

Rams 24, Redskins 0

In Landover, the Rams have back-to-back shutouts for the first time since 1945, giving them their first winning streak of the season.

Jared Cook caught two touchdown passes, Tavon Austin returned a punt 78 yards for a score, and the defense allowed 206 total yards.

The Rams (5-7) sacked Colt McCoy six times. He suffered a neck injury on the sixth sack just before the two-minute warning, so Robert Griffin III finished the game in his first appearance since getting benched two weeks ago. Griffin was sacked once during his brief stint.

St. Louis blanked Oakland 52-0 last Sunday.

The Redskins (3-10) dropped their fifth straight.

Texans 27, Jaguars 13

In Jackonsville, Arian Foster ran for 127 yards and a touchdown, and the Texans won consecutive games for the first time since Week 2.

Foster's 1-yard run on the second play of the fourth quarter gave Houston (7-6) a comfortable cushion in what had been a back-and-forth game.

After quarterback Ryan Fitzpatrick got stuffed on third down, the Texans lined up for a field goal before calling time out and deciding to go. Foster started right and looked like he would be stopped for a loss, but he eluded a tackle, cut back the other way and high-stepped into the end zone.

The Jaguars (2-11) led 13-10 at halftime, but did little after the break.

Vikings 30, Jets 24, OT

In Minneapolis, Jarius Wright's 87-yard touchdown reception from Teddy Bridgewater in overtime gave the Vikings the win.

After forcing the Jets to punt to start the extra period, the Vikings faced third-and-5. Bridgewater was blitzed and threw high on a bubble screen to his right. Wright jumped, made an off-balance grab, slipped by Jaiquawn Jarrett and outran defensive tackle Sheldon Richardson the rest of the way.

Former Vikings receiver Percy Harvin had a 35-yard touchdown reception and a 47-yard kickoff return while finishing with 124 yards on six catches. But he hurt his ankle on a hard hit by Josh Robinson late in the fourth quarter and didn't return. This was his first game in Minnesota in more than two years after playing his first 3 1/2 seasons with the Vikings (6-7), who beat the Jets for the first time in eight matchups since 1975.

Gerald Hodges returned an interception of Geno Smith for a touchdown on the first play from scrimmage, but the much-maligned second-year quarterback bounced back for the Jets (2-11) by going 18 for 29 for 254 yards and gaining 33 yards rushing on six attempts. Smith was just 7 of 13 for 49 yards against Miami in the last game.

Richardson had a safety among his three sacks. But Bridgewater finished 19 for 27 for 309 yards and two touchdowns. Charles Johnson caught the first one for 56 yards and totaled 103 yards on four receptions.

Nick Folk's fifth field goal tied the game at 24 with 23 seconds left in the fourth quarter.

Giants 36, Titans 7

In Nashville, Eli Manning threw for 260 yards and a touchdown, and the Giants snapped a seven-game skid.

The Giants (4-9) won for the first time since Oct. 5 with two rookies having big games. Odell Beckham Jr. set a team rookie record with his fourth game with 100 yards receiving this season: 11 catches for 130 yards and a TD. Andre Williams ran for a season-high 131 yards, including a 50-yard TD.

Tennessee (2-11) lost its seventh straight and for the 11th time in 12 games with a performance that had fans booing and even a handful wearing paper bags over their heads. This is the franchise's longest skid since losing 11 straight in 1994 as the then-Houston Oilers.

Dela Hoya: Khan will fight Pacquiao or Mayweather

BOXING

Oscar De La Hoya, who would seem to have unshakable faith in Amir Khan, says he is determined to secure him a fight against Manny Pacquiao or—less likely—Floyd Mayweather in 2015.

"I'm pushing for a Pacquiao fight," the president of Golden Boy Promotions said before Khan's WBC "silver" welterweight title fight in Las Vegas this weekend against the American Devon Alexander. "And I'm also pushing for a Mayweather fight."

De La Hoya says Khan "is a perfect example" of why welterweight has long been boxing's glamour division. "He is a devastating puncher, has tremendous speed and he knows how to use it. He pleases the fans. He's exciting. People want to watch him fight.

"Amir Khan is just beginning, he has a lot of fight left in him. He's still learning and he's still growing; he's getting stronger and he's getting faster. He's more motivated than ever. If he keeps winning, if he keeps on getting into these big fights that are promised, I really do feel that Amir Khan can be one of the top fighters of all time. But first things first: Devon Alexander is a tough, tough opponent."

Saturday's headliner at the MGM Grand, Khan's first at boxing's headquarters, is notionally designated as an eliminator for Mayweather's full WBC title – although he has not fought a mandatory challenger since Robert Guerrero in May 2013, and the single most powerful figure in boxing is unlikely to be dictated to without significant compensation in the final year of his career.

AP

Amir Khan , left, seen here landing a left on Julio Díaz, is looking to fight either Manny Pacquiao or Floyd Mayweather in 2015, according to Oscar Dela Hoya.

De La Hoya's long-time partner Richard Schaefer left Golden Boy this year to work more closely with Mayweather, prompting fears that the company's influence with the unbeaten WBC champion has been marginalised. Although involved in the promotion, De La Hoya was barely sighted during fight week when Mayweather fought Marcos Maidana in September, but he said: "We're always happy to be working with and promoting Mayweather. We've done it for the last 10 fights.

"But, look, Amir Khan has been having eliminator after eliminator. The time for him is now. He deserves to be fighting Floyd Mayweather. He deserves to be fighting Manny Pacquiao."

The easier fight to make would be against Khan's former gym mate Pacquiao, who looked back to near his best defending the WBO version of the 10st 7lb title against Chris Algieri in Macau two weeks ago. An even easier option is a challenge for Kell Brook's IBF belt. The Sheffield boxer is back in the gym after recovering from a knife attack in September, and wants to box again in March.

"I can see that type of fight happening at Wembley Stadium, for instance, in front of a hundred thousand people," De La Hoya said. "That would possibly be plan B.

"It really rubs me the wrong way that Amir has been promised fighting the likes of Mayweather and Pacquiao and it hasn't happened yet. He is at the perfect moment of his career. And one thing is for sure: 2015 is going to be his year. He is a force to be reckoned with, a threat to everyone in the welterweight division. I've always said if you put him up to the test, if you put him up against a Floyd Mayweather, a Manny Pacquiao, don't be surprised if he wins."

Which all sounds encouraging—except, as the former six-weight world champion acknowledges, Mayweather has let down Khan twice before, choosing each time to fight the slower, more predictable Maidana, whom Khan beat in 2010.

There is also the slim prospect of Pacquiao and Mayweather finally fighting each other, which would wreck all calculations. "I'll believe it when I see it," De La Hoya said. "I've heard it for about five years. It's very complicated. First of all, you have one fighter [Pacquiao] with HBO and the other with Showtime. You have sponsors. But most importantly, you have egos and egos can get in the way of making big fights happen."

This is also Khan's last fight with Showtime—and marks his return to Sky after a spell on BoxNation—so he needs to win well against Alexander to demonstrate he is worth a shot at Mayweather, who has two fights left on his six-fight deal with the network.

Adam Smith, Sky's executive producer of boxing, says: "It's a vital fight for Amir and for British boxing, with both fighters desperate for the chance that could come their way in 2015."

THUNDER

From Page 28

ning at the start of the 2014 season on Nov. 29 before bouncing back quickly against the Vikings.

Quarterback Brent Azarcon had two rushing touchdowns in leading the Southern Thunder to victory, as he ran a combined 14 yards in the first and second quarters to help the Jermain Catching-coached squad enjoy a 26-6 cushion at the turn.

Azarcon scored his first TD, a 6-yard run, early in the first period after failing to find an open teammate against the Vikings defense. His second TD, this time an 8-yard sprint to the end zone, had the Thunder holding on to the 20-point lead.

His TDs sandwiched similar strikes of Matthew Reyes, 7-yard TD run, and N-Nes Siech's 5-yard sprint. Jeremy Agulto made the 2-point conversion, a 3-yard dash, for a 20-0 count with four minutes gone in the second canto.

Derrick Aguon got the Vikings on the scoreboard following a 31-yard run midway in the second quarter.

Don Pangelinan's 15-yard run, off a 5-yard penalty after a false start by the Northern offense, resulted in Aguon's TD.

However, the lucky break failed to ignite the Joe Ocampo-mentored Northern side's offense as they were grounded by the Thunder defense the entire third quarter.

Napu Atalig scored on a 12-yard TD, while Franko Bundoc had a 3-yard run for the 2-point conversion to give the Thunder a 34-6 spread entering the fourth period.

Lightning quarterback Anthony Quitugua scored the team's other TD, a 14-yard run early in the fourth. Neldreyton Skera made the 2-point conversion, a 3-yard sprint for a 14-34 tally.

Atalig scored another 12-yard TD in the closing seconds of the fourth, 40-14, which became the final tally, as Jerrett Rosario took a knee and the referee blew his whistle.

Atalig had 104 of the Thunder's 298 yards rushing, while Azarcon made 16 of his team's 37 passing yards.

TAN

From Page 28

unbeaten in the division as she also topped Malika Miyawaki, 6-0, 6-1. Ishikawa defeated Miyawaki, too, 6-1, 6-3, to get the runner-up honors.

In the men's 4.0 singles, Robbie Schorr was perfect in three games to rule the division.

Schorr started his string of wins with an impressive 6-0, 6-0 triumph over Isagani Cortez last Friday. Then last Sunday, Schorr met doubles partner Steven Goodwin in a morning match at the Hyatt Regency Saipan tennis courts and won, too, 6-1, 6-1. Schorr returned to Hyatt in the afternoon for the division title-deciding game against Vincent Tudela and kept his unbeaten record with a 7-6 (7-2), 6-4 victory.

Before losing to Schorr, Tudela won his first two games in the division. Tudela began his title bid with a 6-3, 6-0 victory over Goodwin last Friday, while the former's second win came last Saturday versus Cortez, 6-3, 6-1.

In the men's over 40 singles, Raj Rai dethroned Gary Ramsey after registering a 6-3, 6-1 win in their title duel last Sunday.

Ramsey, who topped last year's round-robin tournament, moved one win away from his second straight division crown after eliminating Bob Webb last Saturday, 6-4, 6-4. In the other semis pairing, Rai booted out Fr. Ryan Jimenez, 6-3, 6-1.

Meanwhile, the mixed doubles and women's and men's doubles events of the annual tournament were also played last weekend and results will be reported later this week.

FEDS

From Page 28

and Juan Camacho tallied 14 and 12 markers, respectively, while Esteves scored 11.

Omar Ajoste led CHC with 16 points, Anthony Raho added 10 markers , and Sam Fernandez and Adrian Flores finished with 10 points apiece.

CHC's loss to the Feds in the playoffs was a far improvement from the 44-point humbling it suffered against the same team on Oct. 15, 88-44.

Earlier in the first game, Edwin Camacho and Trevor Ogumoro were at the forefront of DPS' balanced scoring attack in beating DCCA.

DPS held DCCA to 13 points in the first half to enjoy an early double-digit lead and was hardly threatened after that.

Camacho and Ogumoro scattered 11 points each, while Suane Pua and Maverick Saures made 7 markers apiece. Six other DPS players scored 2 or more points.

Perry Inos finished with a game-high 21 points, while Tim Wesley chipped in 11, but they failed to get the needed scoring support from the rest of the team.

First Game

DPS 58–Camacho 11, Ogumoro 11, S. Pua 7, M. Saures 7, George 4, Iginoef 4, J. Pua 4, Rabauliman 4, J. Saures 3, Joab 2.

DCCA 44–Inos 21, Wesley 11, Manabat 4, Aaron 2, Ray Deleon Guerrero Jr. 2, Ro. Deleon Guerrero 2, Mangarero 2.

Scoring by quarters: 15-6, 28-13, 44-28, 58-44.

Second Game

Feds 83–Gamboa 22, Apelo 14, Camacho 12, Esteves 11, McCain 8, Park 4, Backe 3, Maratita 3, Deleon Guerrero 2, Ogarto 2, Paras 2.

CHC 66–O. Ajoste 16, Raho 14, Fernandez 10, Flores 10, Bahillo 7, Marilla 3, Culala 2, Tudela 2.

Scoring by quarters: 18-12, 34-29, 64-40, 83-66.

4

From Page 27

sealed it for Sun Palace after the CNMI bets moved within one, 2-3, with Diane Pablo and Sarah Allen scoring in the 61st and 71st minute, respectively. Jin's goal in the 79th minute gave Sun Palace more breathing room before Kim added two more and the former closed out the scoring, two minutes before the match wrapped up.

In the other Plate Championship match, Hojin Woo and Owen Ji came to Shirley's rescue to help the team advance to the next round.

Woo scored in the 52nd minute to shatter the 2-2 deadlock, while Ji drained the insurance 20 minutes later. Shirley's and the Thundercats engaged in a deadlock after the first half with Mareko Tekopua making the former's pair of goals and Timothy Tawanpiy and Hyun Tae Kim hitting the board for the Thundercats.

Next up Shirley's is Sun Palace, as they collide for the second finals ticket this Sunday at 7:30pm. Division 1 top finisher Matansa FC will battle the first finals berth against the winner of tonight's playoff match between World Resort and Kanoa FC.

JERICHO

From Page 27

finished with 12 points. He then tallied 15 markers, 5 rebounds, and 2 steals in the Painters' 107-79 crushing of Meralco in a PBA out-of-town game in Davao City.

Cruz's heroics earned him the admiration of Rain or Shine coach Yeng Guiao.

"Special mention to Jericho Cruz. He played like a veteran. He made us look good when we picked him in the rookie draft," said the outspoken mentor in the postgame interview with sports website Spin.ph

"He made his free throws, defended well, and made those baskets. It certainly made us look good drafting him."

Cruz said that he was just repaying the trust given to him by Guiao.

"We're happy we got this win. I hope it would continue in the semis round. I thank coach Yeng for the trust he has given me and to my teammates for all the help," Cruz added.

The Painters ended the conference with 9-2 card following a 100-90 triumph over crowd favorite Barangay Ginebra last Sunday to earn one of the two automatic semis berths in the Philippine Cup.

4 survive Cup, Plate Championship opener

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Four teams made the grade at the start of M-League's Cup and Plate Championship last Sunday at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

In the Cup Championship, MP United shut down Paire FC, 3-0, while Tan Holdings FC also blanked Korean Football Association on Saipan, 4-0, in another Division 1 pairing. With their victories, MP United and Tan Holdings secured the last two semis berths in the Cup Championship and they will challenge the second-ranked Wild Bill's and top-seeded Inter Godfathers, respectively, in this Sunday's Final Four games. Wild Bill's and Inter Godfather's drew byes last Sunday and gained the automatic semis tickets after placing in the Top 2 in Division 1 of M-League's fall season.

MP United joined the first two semifinalists after getting a hat-trick from Joe Miller. Miller made all his three goals in the first half, starting his streak in the 16 minute and getting his second 12 minutes later. He capped his strong first half with another goal, just four minutes before the opening frame concluded.

In the Tan Holdings FC-KFAS tiff, the former drew two goals from Sean Perez and one each from Russell Zapanta and Martin Jambor.

Both teams struggled offensively in early goings of the game, as they came from more than one week break. Zapanta then broke Tan Holdings' silence with a goal in the 30th minute, while Perez also hit his target six minutes later to give the team the 2-0 halftime edge.

In the second half, goals continued to elude KFAS, while Tan Holdings got two more to seal the victory late in that frame. Jambor made it a 3-0 advantage with his goal in the 68th minute, while Perez completed a brace with his conversion in the 72nd.

Meanwhile, in the Plate Championship, Sun Palace and Shirley's Football Club also advanced to the semifinals after ousting separate foes in the single-elimination tournament.

Sun Palace dominated the CNMI Women's National Team in the third game of the weekend, 7-2, while Shirley's downed the Thundercats in the final match, 4-2.

Joon Kim starred in Sun Palace's easy win, scoring four goals, while Feng Chun Jin contributed two, and Heng Guo Piao chipped in one.

Piao opened the scoring for Sun Palace with his goal in the fourth minute, while the team's remaining goals were all made in the second half,

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Players from Sun Palace, left, and the CNMI Women's National Team collide as they battle for the ball during their game in M-League's Plate Championship last Sunday at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

as the CNMI 's female players could not stop the bleeding in the final frame. Kim began Sun Palace's second-half demolition with his two straight goals in a span of two minutes (64th and 66th) and he drilled two more, also in back-to-back fashion (83rd and 85th).

Kim's two consecutive goals

See 4 on Page 26

Saints, Rollers A complete U18 semis cast

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Chalan Kanoa Saints and Rollers A punched the last two semis tickets in U18 division of the 2014 BANMI Youth League after winning their respective playoff matches yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

The Saints played in the first game and edged the Ol'Aces, 54-47, while in the second game, the Rollers A coasted past Division of Youth Services, 70-55. The top-ranked San Jose Ol'Aces and second-seeded Kentucky Fried Chicken earlier notched the first two semis berths and will challenge the Rollers A and Saints, respectively, in today's two Final Four pairings. KFC and the Saints duel in the first match at 6:30pm, while the SJ Ol'Aces battle the Rollers B in the second game at 6:30pm. Winners of tonight's tiffs will square off for the championship this Saturday at 11:30am.

The Rollers A moved one win away from the title game, as it pulled away from its playoff match with DYS in the second quarter.

Ahead by only six after the first period, 24-18, the Rollers A more than doubled up DYS in the second period with its 20-9 scoring surge to take a promising 44-27 halftime advantage. Prince Factor led the breakaway, scoring 7 points in the second period, while three of his teammates added at least two baskets each.

The Rollers A was never threatened from thereon, preserving its double-digit lead in the second half as DYS could not hit baskets in streak, while the opposing team continued to spread the wealth.

Factor top-scored for Rollers A with his 20 points, while five of his teammates finished with at least 7 markers each. Djay Ong paced DYS with his 14 markers.

In the first game, Michael Espinosa towed the Saints to victory after firing a game-high 22 points.

Espinosa's consistent scoring allowed the Saints to lead the Ol'Aces at the end of each quarter. He saved his best for last, drilling 9 of his total points in the fourth, including the Saints' last 5 to seal the 7-point victory.

Jun Fidelino backed up Espinosa as the latter contributed 11, while Renan Lansang added 6. Kenji Abobo had 13 for the Ol'Aces.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

The G-Rollers' Mike Arciga tries to dribble past Dream Team's Shane Deleon Guerrero during their U21 playoff game in the BANMI youth caging yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium. Arciaga also played for the Rollers A, which defeated Division of Youth Services, 70-55, in the U18 playoff match yesterday.

First Game

C.K. Saints 54–Espinosa 22, Fidelino 11, Lansang 6, Reyes , Pangelinan 4.

Ol'Aces 47–Abobo 13, Borja 11, Miller 8, Cristobal 4, Kabiriel 2.

Scoring by quarters: 13-8, 23-18, 36-32, 54-47.

Second Game

Rollers A 70–Factor 20, Arciaga 9, Camacho 8, Malonzo 7, Feria 7, Babauta 7, Vivero 2, Iglecias 2.

DYS 55–Ong 14, Flores 12, Salalila 11, Manalili 7, J. Santos 5, Montes 4, Ellama 3.

Scoring by quarters: 24-18, 44-27, 59-42, 70-55.

Jericho earns Best Player of the Game honors

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Jericho Cruz finally had his break out game in a Rain or Shine jersey as the former CNMI National Team member helped his team complete a come-from-behind 98-95 win over Alaska last week in the Philippine Basketball Association Philippine Cup.

Cruz scored 10 points in the fourth quarter for the Elasto Painters, including the team's last 4 that sealed ROS' place in the semifinals of the PBA's season-opening conference. He finished with 16 markers, 6 rebounds, 4 assists, and 3 steals to earn Best Player of the Game honors.

The 24-year-old former Adamson King Falcon and the Painters' ninth overall pick in this year's rookie draf, capped his impressive performance with a breakaway layup to secure Rain or Shine's sixth straight win.

Cruz was the third best scorer for the Elasto Painters behind shifty guard Paul Lee's 19-point, 8-rebound, 5-assist performance and big man Beau Belga's double-double of 16 markers and 12 boards.

It was Cruz's third time in his rookie season to score in double digits, with the first one recorded in ROS' 117-88 demolition of expansion team and the Manny Pacquioa-coached Kia Sorentos, as he

See JERICHO on Page 26

KC CRUZ

Jericho Cruz celebrates after scoring the breakaway layup that sealed Rain or Shine's victory against Alaska last week in the Philippine Basketball Association Philippine Cup.

Wilson leads Seahawks over Eagles, 24-14

PAGE 25

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Pelicans top Lakers, end road losing skid

PAGE 24

Tan, Beling clinch singles crowns

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Luke Beling notched the co-ed Open singles title, while Tania Tan this time finished on top of the field, as the 6th Tan Holdings Tennis Classic concluded last Sunday.

Beling, who won the men's Open singles crown last year against Jeff Race, was pitted against junior player Moris Villanueva in the 2014 finale and swept his way to the title with a 6-0, 6-2 win last Sunday at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan tennis courts.

Beling, a teaching pro at Fiesta, arranged a finals showdown with Villanueva after eliminating female player Negahr Rastguiy last Saturday, 6-0, 6-1. Rastguiy, one of the only two female players in the draw, forged a semis date with Beling following a tough 3-6, 6-3, 16-14 victory over Michael Ren last Friday.

Villanueva, on the other hand, booked a finals berth after prevailing against the injured Bobby Cruz last Saturday, 4-6, 7-5 (retired). The win was Villanueva's second, as he earlier booted out Luther Lizama last Friday, 6-1, 6-3. Cruz also played last Friday and downed the other female player in the field—Mikayla Lopez, 7-5, 6-4.

In the women's 4.0 singles, Tan, who settled for runner-up honors in the women's 2.0 singles last year, ruled the round-robin competition this season. She clinched the division crown after outlasting doubles partner Julia Ishikawa last Sunday, 3-6, 6-2, 6-1. Tan was

See TAN on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Tania Tan goes for a backhand return against Julia Ishikawa during their women's 4.0 singles game in the 6th Tan Holdings Tennis Classic last Sunday at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan tennis courts.

Thunder ground Vikings for first win

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Southern Thunder put their opening day loss to the Eastern Lightning behind them to score a 40-14 win against the Northern Vikings in Week 2 of the Commonwealth Football League Association Youth League last Saturday at the CPA Airport Field.

The Thunder suffered a 40-20 humbling against the reigning titlist Light-

See THUNDER on Page 26

JON PEREZ

The Southern Thunder's N-Nes Siech, right, runs for a 5-yard touchdown, while his teammate shields him from Northern Vikings players during their game in the Commonwealth Football League Association Youth League last Saturday at the CPA Airport Field.

Feds, DPS tame foes in inter-gov't playoffs

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Feds and Department of Public Safety tamed their separate foes to open up their respective playoffs campaign in the 2014 IT&E-DYS Inter-government Basketball League on a high note last Friday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

The top-seeded Feds used a second-half scoring spree in coasting to an 83-66 win over Commonwealth Health Center, while DPS thrashed Department of Community and Cultural Affairs, 58-44.

Holding on to a still manageable 34-29 spread at the turn, Ronnel Gamboa and Joe Esteves led the Feds' second-half breakaway as they combined for 20 of their team's 30 points in the third period. Gamboa tallied 12, including 10 straight early in the third.

The Feds never let CHC recover from there as it had an answer on its opponents' every comeback attempt to book its fourth straight win since dropping a 71-65 decision against DCAA on Oct. 20.

Gamboa paced Feds with a game-high 22 points, making three of their team's eight 3-pointers. Leo Apelo

See FEDS on Page 26

JON PEREZ

The Feds' Haejun Park, center, battles Commonwealth Health Center's Adrian Flores, left, and Jonathan Nunag for the rebound in their game in the 2014 IT&E-DYS Inter-government Basketball League Friday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.